

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."—SHAKESPEARE.

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

A WEEKLY JOURNAL.

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THE MOONSTONE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c. &c.

SECOND PERIOD. THE DISCOVERY OF THE TRUTH. (1848—1849.)

SIXTH NARRATIVE.

Contributed by Sergeant Cuff.

I.

DORKING, Surrey, July 30th, 1849. To Franklin Blake, Esq. Sir.—I beg to apologise for the delay that has occurred in the production of the Report with which I engaged to furnish you. I have waited to make it a complete Report; and I have been met, here and there, by obstacles which it was only possible to remove by some little expenditure of patience and time.

The object which I proposed to myself has now, I hope, been attained. You will find, in these pages, answers to the greater part—if not all—of the questions, concerning the late Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite, which occurred to your mind when I last had the honour of seeing you.

I propose to tell you—in the first place—what is known of the manner in which your cousin met his death; appending to the statement such inferences and conclusions as we are justified (according to my opinion) in drawing from the facts.

I shall then endeavour—in the second place—to put you in possession of such discoveries as I have made, respecting the proceedings of Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite, before, during, and after the time, when you and he met as guests at the late Lady Verinder's country house.

II.

As to your cousin's death, then, first.

It appears to me to be established, beyond any reasonable doubt, that he was killed (while he was asleep, or immediately on his waking) by being smothered with a pillow from his bed—that the persons guilty of murdering him are the three Indians—and that the object contemplated (and achieved) by the crime, was to obtain possession of the diamond, called The Moonstone.

The facts from which this conclusion is drawn, are derived partly from an examination of the room at the tavern; and partly from the evidence obtained at the Coroner's Inquest.

On forcing the door of the room, the deceased gentleman was discovered, dead, with the pillow of the bed over his face. The medical man who examined him, being informed of this circumstance, considered the post-mortem appearances as being perfectly compatible with murder by smothering—that is to say, with murder committed by some person, or persons, pressing the pillow over the nose and mouth of the deceased, until death resulted from congestion of the lungs.

Next, as to the motive for the crime.

A small box, with a sealed paper torn off from it (the paper containing an inscription) was found open, and empty, on a table in the room. Mr. Luker has himself personally identified the box, the seal, and the inscription. He has declared that the box did actually contain the diamond, called the Moonstone; and he has admitted having given the box (thus sealed up) to Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite (then concealed under a disguise), on the afternoon of the twenty-sixth of June last. The fair inference from all this is, that the stealing of the Moonstone was the motive of the crime.

Next, as to the manner in which the crime was committed.

On examination of the room (which is only seven feet high), a trap-door in the ceiling, leading out on to the roof of the house, was discovered open. The short ladder, used for obtaining access to the trap-door (and kept under the bed), was found placed at the opening, so as to enable any person, or persons, in the room, to leave it again easily. In the trap-door itself was found a square aperture cut in the wood, apparently with some exceedingly sharp instrument, just behind the bolt which fastened the door on the inner side. In this way, any person from the outside could have drawn back the bolt, and opened the door, and have dropped (or have been noiselessly lowered by an accomplice) into the room—its height, as already observed, being only seven feet. That some person, or persons, must have got admission in this way, appears evident from the fact of the aperture being there. As to the manner in which he (or they) obtained access to the roof of the tavern, it is to be remarked that the third house, lower down in the street, was empty, and under repair—that a long ladder was left by the workmen, leading from the pavement to the top of the house—and that,

on returning to their work, on the morning of the 27th, the men found the plank which they had tied to the ladder, to prevent any one from using it in their absence, removed, and lying on the ground. As to the possibility of ascending by this ladder, passing over the roofs of the houses, passing back, and descending again, unobserved—it is discovered, on the evidence of the night policeman, that he only passes through Shore Lane twice in an hour, when out on his beat. The testimony of the inhabitants also declares, that Shore Lane, after midnight, is one of the quietest and loneliest streets in London. Here again, therefore, it seems fair to infer that—with ordinary caution, and presence of mind—any man, or men, might have ascended by the ladder, and might have descended again, unobserved. Once on the roof of the tavern, it has been proved, by experiment, that a man might cut through the trap-door, while lying down on it, and that in such a position, the parapet in front of the house would conceal him from the view of any one passing in the street.

Lastly, as to the person, or persons, by whom the crime was committed.

It is known (1) that the Indians had an interest in possessing themselves of the Diamond. (2) It is at least probable that the man looking like an Indian, whom Octavius Guy saw at the window of the cab, speaking to the man dressed like a mechanic, was one of the three Hindoo conspirators. (3) It is certain that this same man dressed like a mechanic, was seen keeping Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite in view, all through the evening of the 26th, and was found in the bedroom (before Mr. Ablewhite was shown into it) under circumstances which lead to the suspicion that he was examining the room. (4) A morsel of torn gold thread was picked up in the bedroom, which persons expert in such matters, declare to be of Indian manufacture, and to be a species of gold thread not known in England. (5) On the morning of the 27th, three men, answering to the description of the three Indians, were observed in Lower Thames Street, were traced to the Tower Wharf, and were seen to leave London by the steamer bound for Rotterdam.

There is here, moral, if not legal, evidence, that the murder was committed by the Indians.

Whether the man personating a mechanic was, or was not, an accomplice in the crime, it is impossible to say. That he could have committed the murder, alone, seems beyond the limits of probability. Acting by himself, he could hardly have smothered Mr. Ablewhite—who was the taller and the stronger man of the two—without a struggle taking place, or a cry being heard. A servant girl, sleeping in the next room, heard nothing. The landlord, sleeping in the room below, heard nothing. The whole evidence points to the inference that more than one man was concerned in this crime—and the circumstances, I repeat, morally justify the conclusion that the Indians committed it.

I have only to add, that the verdict at the Coroner's Inquest was Wilful Murder against some person, or persons, unknown. Mr. Ablewhite's family have offered a reward, and no effort has been left untried to discover the guilty persons. The man dressed like a mechanic has eluded all inquiries. The Indians have been traced. As to the prospect of ultimately capturing these last, I shall have a word to say to you on that head, when I reach the end of the present Report.

In the mean while, having now written all that is needful on the subject of Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite's death, I may pass next to the narrative of his proceedings before, during, and after the time, when you and he met at the late Lady Verinder's house.

III.

With regard to the subject now in hand, I may state, at the outset, that Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite's life had two sides to it.

The side turned up to the public view, presented the spectacle of a gentleman, possessed of considerable reputation as a speaker at charitable meetings, and endowed with administrative abilities, which he placed at the disposal of various Benevolent Societies, mostly of the female sort. The side kept hidden from the general notice, exhibited this same gentleman in the totally different character of a man of pleasure, with a villa in the suburbs which was not taken in his own name, and with a lady in the villa, who was not taken in his own name, either.

My investigations in the villa have shown me several fine pictures and statues; furniture tastefully selected, and admirably made; and a conservatory of the rarest flowers, the match of which it would not be easy to find in all London. My investigation of the lady has resulted in the discovery of jewels which are worthy to take rank with the flowers, and of carriages and horses which have (deservedly) produced a sensation in the Park, among persons well qualified to judge of the build of the one, and the breed of the others.

All this is, so far, common enough. The villa and the lady are such familiar objects in London life, that I ought to apologise for introducing them to notice. But what is not common and not familiar (in my experience), is that all these fine things were not only ordered, but paid for. The pictures, the statues, the flowers, the jewels, the carriages and the horses—inquiry proved, to my indescribable astonishment, that not a sixpence of debt was owing on any of them. As to the villa, it had been bought, out and out, and settled on the lady.

I might have tried to find the right reading of this riddle, and tried in vain—but for Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite's death, which caused an inquiry to be made into the state of his affairs.

The inquiry elicited these facts:—

That Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite was entrusted with the care of a sum of twenty thousand pounds—as one of two Trustees for a young gentle-

man, who was still a minor in the year eighteen hundred and forty-eight. That the Trust was to lapse, and that the young gentleman was to receive the twenty thousand pounds, on the day when he came of age, in the month of February, eighteen hundred and fifty. That, pending the arrival of this period, an income of six hundred pounds was to be paid to him by his two Trustees, half yearly—at Christmas, and at Midsummer Day. That this income was regularly paid by the active Trustee, Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite. That the twenty thousand pounds (from which the income was supposed to be derived) had, every farthing of it, been sold out of the Funds, at different periods, ending with the end of the year eighteen hundred and forty-seven. That the power of attorney, authorising the bankers to sell out the stock, and the various written orders telling them what amounts to sell out, were formally signed by both the Trustees. That the signature of the second Trustee (a retired army officer, living in the country) was a signature forged, in every case, by the active Trustee—otherwise, Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite.

In these facts, lies the explanation of Mr. Godfrey's honourable conduct, in paying the debts incurred for the lady and the villa—and (as you will presently see) of more besides.

We may now advance to the date of Miss Verinder's birthday (in the year eighteen hundred and forty-eight)—the twenty-first of June.

On the day before, Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite arrived at his father's house, and asked (as I know from Mr. Ablewhite, senior, himself) for a loan of three hundred pounds. Mark the sum; and remember at the same time, that the half yearly payment to the young gentleman was due on the twenty-fourth of the month. Also, that the whole of the young gentleman's fortune had been spent by his Trustee, by the end of the year 'forty-seven.

Mr. Ablewhite, senior, refused to lend his son a farthing.

The next day Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite rode over, with you, to Lady Verinder's house. A few hours afterwards, Mr. Godfrey (as you yourself have told me) made a proposal of marriage to Miss Verinder. Here, he saw his way no doubt—if accepted—to the end of all his money-anxieties, present and future. But, as events actually turned out, what happened? Miss Verinder refused him.

On the night of the birthday, therefore, Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite's pecuniary position was this. He had three hundred pounds to find on the twenty-fourth of the month, and twenty thousand pounds to find in February eighteen hundred and fifty. Failing to raise these sums, at these times, he was a ruined man.

Under those circumstances, what takes place next?

You exasperate Mr. Candy, the doctor, on the sore subject of his profession; and he plays you a practical joke, in return, with a dose of laudanum. He trusts the administration of

the dose (prepared in a little phial) to Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite—who has himself confessed the share he had in the matter, under circumstances which shall presently be related to you. Mr. Godfrey is all the readier to enter into the conspiracy, having himself suffered from your sharp tongue, in the course of the evening. He joins Beteredge in persuading you to drink a little brandy and water before you go to bed. He privately drops the dose of laudanum into your cold grog. And you drink the mixture.

Let us now shift the scene, if you please, to Mr. Luker's house at Lambeth. And allow me to remark, by way of preface, that Mr. Bruff and I, together, have found a means of forcing the money-lender to make a clean breast of it. We have carefully sifted the statement he has addressed to us; and here it is at your service.

IV.

Late on the evening of Friday, the twenty-third of June ('forty-eight), Mr. Luker was surprised by a visit from Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite. He was more than surprised, when Mr. Godfrey produced the Moonstone. No such diamond (according to Mr. Luker's experience) was in the possession of any private person in Europe.

Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite had two modest proposals to make, in relation to this magnificent gem. First, Would Mr. Luker be so good as to buy it? Secondly, Would Mr. Luker (in default of seeing his way to the purchase) undertake to sell it on commission, and to pay a sum down, on the anticipated result?

Mr. Luker tested the Diamond, weighed the Diamond, and estimated the value of the Diamond, before he answered a word. His estimate (allowing for the flaw in the stone) was thirty thousand pounds.

Having reached that result, Mr. Luker opened his lips, and put a question: "How did you come by this?" Only six words! But what volumes of meaning in them!

Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite began a story. Mr. Luker opened his lips again, and only said three words, this time. "That won't do!"

Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite began another story. Mr. Luker wasted no more words on him. He got up, and rang the bell for the servant, to show the gentleman out.

Upon this compulsion, Mr. Godfrey made an effort, and came out with a new and amended version of the affair, to the following effect.

After privately slipping the laudanum into your brandy and water, he wished you good-night, and went into his own room. It was the next room to your's; and the two had a door of communication between them. On entering his own room Mr. Godfrey (as he supposed) closed this door. His money-troubles kept him awake. He sat, in his dressing-gown and slippers, for nearly an hour, thinking over his position. Just as he was preparing to get into bed, he heard you, talking to yourself, in your own room, and going to the door of communication, found that he had not shut it as he supposed.

He looked into your room to see what was the matter. He discovered you with the candle in your hand, just leaving your bedchamber. He heard you say to yourself, in a voice quite unlike your own voice, "How do I know? The Indians may be hidden in the house."

Up to that time, he had simply supposed himself (in giving you the laudanum) to be helping to make you the victim of a harmless practical joke. It now occurred to him, that the laudanum had taken some effect on you, which had not been foreseen by the doctor, any more than by himself. In the fear of an accident happening, he followed you softly to see what you would do.

He followed you to Miss Verinder's sitting-room, and saw you go in. You left the door open. He looked through the crevice thus produced, between the door and the post, before he ventured into the room himself.

In that position, he not only detected you in taking the Diamond out of the drawer—he also detected Miss Verinder, silently watching you from her bedroom, through her open door. He saw that *she* saw you take the Diamond, too.

Before you left the sitting-room again, you hesitated a little. Mr. Godfrey took advantage of this hesitation to get back again to his bedroom before you came out, and discovered him. He had barely got back, before you got back too. You saw him (as he supposes) just as he was passing through the door of communication. At any rate, you called to him in a strange, drowsy voice.

He came back to you. You looked at him in a dull sleepy way. You put the Diamond into his hand. You said to him, "Take it back, Godfrey, to your father's bank. It's safe there—it's not safe here." You turned away unsteadily, and put on your dressing-gown. You sat down in the large arm-chair in your room. You said, "I can't take it back to the bank. My head's like lead—and I can't feel my feet under me." Your head sank on the back of the chair—you heaved a heavy sigh—and you fell asleep.

Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite went back, with the Diamond, into his own room. His statement is, that he came to no conclusion, at that time—except that he would wait, and see what happened in the morning.

When the morning came, your language and conduct showed that you were absolutely ignorant of what you had said and done overnight. At the same time, Miss Verinder's language and conduct showed that she was resolved to say nothing (in mercy to you) on her side. If Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite chose to keep the Diamond, he might do so with perfect impunity. The Moonstone stood between him, and ruin. He put the Moonstone into his pocket.

v.

This was the story told by your cousin (under pressure of necessity) to Mr. Luker.

Mr. Luker believed the story to be, as to all main essentials, true—on this ground, that Mr.

Godfrey Ablewhite was too great a fool to have invented it. Mr. Bruff and I agree with Mr. Luker, in considering this test of the truth of the story to be a perfectly reliable one.

The next question, was the question of what Mr. Luker would do, in the matter of the Moonstone. He proposed the following terms, as the only terms on which he would consent to mix himself up with, what was (even in *his* line of business) a doubtful and dangerous transaction.

Mr. Luker would consent to lend Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite the sum of two thousand pounds, on condition that the Moonstone was to be deposited with him as a pledge. If, at the expiration of one year from that date, Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite paid three thousand pounds to Mr. Luker, he was to receive back the Diamond, as a pledge redeemed. If he failed to produce the money at the expiration of the year, the pledge (otherwise the Moonstone) was to be considered as forfeited to Mr. Luker—who would, in this latter case, generously make Mr. Godfrey a present of certain promissory notes of his (relating to former dealings) which were then in the money-lender's possession.

It is needless to say, that Mr. Godfrey indignantly refused to listen to these monstrous terms. Mr. Luker, thereupon, handed him back the Diamond, and wished him good night.

Your cousin went to the door, and came back again. How was he to be sure that the conversation of that evening would be kept strictly a secret between his friend and himself?

Mr. Luker didn't profess to know how. If Mr. Godfrey had accepted his terms, Mr. Godfrey would have made him an accomplice, and might have counted on his silence as on a certainty. As things were, Mr. Luker must be guided by his own interests. If awkward inquiries were made, how could he be expected to compromise himself, for the sake of a man who had declined to deal with him?

Receiving this reply, Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite did, what all animals (human and otherwise) do, when they find themselves caught in a trap. He looked about him in a state of helpless despair. The day of the month, recorded on a neat little card in a box on the money-lender's chimney-piece, happened to attract his eye. It was the twenty-third of June. On the twenty-fourth, he had three hundred pounds to pay to the young gentleman for whom he was trustee, and no chance of raising the money, except the chance that Mr. Luker had offered to him. But for this miserable obstacle, he might have taken the Diamond to Amsterdam, and have made a marketable commodity of it, by having it cut up into separate stones. As matters stood, he had no choice but to accept Mr. Luker's terms. After all, he had a year at his disposal, in which to raise the three thousand pounds—and a year is a long time.

Mr. Luker drew out the necessary documents on the spot. When they were signed, he gave Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite two cheques. One,

dated June 23rd, for three hundred pounds. Another, dated a week on, for the remaining balance—seventeen hundred pounds.

How the Moonstone was trusted to the keeping of Mr. Luker's bankers, and how the Indians treated Mr. Luker and Mr. Godfrey (after that had been done) you know already.

The next event in your cousin's life, refers again to Miss Verinder. He proposed marriage to her for the second time—and (after having been accepted) he consented, at her request, to consider the marriage as broken off. One of his reasons for making this concession has been penetrated by Mr. Bruff. Miss Verinder had only a life-interest in her mother's property—and there was no raising the missing twenty thousand pounds on *that*.

But you will say, he might have saved the three thousand pounds, to redeem the pledged Diamond, if he had married. He might have done so certainly—supposing neither his wife, nor her guardians and trustees, objected to his anticipating more than half of the income at his disposal, for some unknown purpose, in the first year of his marriage. But even if he got over this obstacle, there was another waiting for him in the background. The lady at the Villa, had heard of his contemplated marriage. A superb woman, Mr. Blake, of the sort that are not to be trifled with—the sort with the light complexion and the Roman nose. She felt the utmost contempt for Mr. Godfrey Ablewhite. It would be silent contempt, if he made a handsome provision for her. Otherwise, it would be contempt with a tongue to it. Miss Verinder's life-interest allowed him no more hope of raising the "provision" than of raising the twenty thousand pounds. He couldn't marry—he really couldn't marry, under all the circumstances.

How he tried his luck again with another lady, and how *that* marriage also broke down on the question of money, you know already. You also know of the legacy of five thousand pounds, left to him shortly afterwards, by one of those many admirers among the soft sex whose good graces this fascinating man had contrived to win. That legacy (as the event has proved) led him to his death.

I have ascertained that when he went abroad, on getting his five thousand pounds, he went to Amsterdam. There, he made all the necessary arrangements for having the Diamond cut into separate stones. He came back (in disguise), and redeemed the Moonstone on the appointed day. A few days were allowed to elapse (as a precaution agreed to by both parties), before the jewel was actually taken out of the bank. If he had got safe with it to Amsterdam, there would have been just time between July 'forty-nine, and February 'fifty (when the young gentleman came of age) to cut the Diamond, and to make a marketable commodity (polished or unpolished) of the separate stones. Judge from this, what motives he had to run the risk which he actually ran. It was "neck or nothing" with him—if ever it was "neck or nothing" with a man yet.

I have only to remind you, before closing this Report, that there is a chance of laying hands on the Indians, and of recovering the Moonstone yet. They are now (there is every reason to believe) on their passage to Bombay, in an East Indiaman. The ship (barring accidents) will touch at no other port on her way out; and the authorities at Bombay (already communicated with by letter, overland) will be prepared to board the vessel, the moment she enters the harbour.

I have the honour to remain, dear sir, your obedient servant, RICHARD CUFF (late sergeant in the Detective Force, Scotland Yard, London).*

SEVENTH NARRATIVE.

In a Letter from Mr. Candy.

FRIZINGHALL, Wednesday, September 26th, 1849.—Dear Mr. Franklin Blake, you will anticipate the sad news I have to tell you, on finding your letter to Ezra Jennings returned to you, unopened, in this enclosure. He died in my arms, at sunrise, on Wednesday last.

I am not to blame for having failed to warn you that his end was at hand. He expressly forbade me to write to you. "I am indebted to Mr. Franklin Blake," he said, "for having seen some happy days. Don't distress him, Mr. Candy—don't distress him."

His sufferings, up to the last six hours of his life, were terrible to see. In the intervals of remission, when his mind was clear, I entreated him to tell me of any relatives of his to whom I might write. He asked to be forgiven for refusing anything to *me*. And then he said—not bitterly—that he would die as he had lived, forgotten and unknown. He maintained that resolution to the last. There is no hope now of making any discoveries concerning him. His story is a blank.

The day before he died, he told me where to find all his papers. I brought them to him on his bed. There was a little bundle of old letters which he put aside. There was his unfinished book. There was his Diary—in many locked volumes. He opened the volume for this year, and tore out, one by one, the pages relating to the time when you and he were together. "Give those," he said, "to Mr. Franklin Blake. In years to come, he may feel an interest in looking back at what is written there." Then he clasped his hands, and prayed God fervently to bless you, and those dear to you. He said he should like to see you again. But the next moment, he altered his mind. "No," he answered, when I offered to write. "I won't distress him! I won't distress him!"

At his request, I next collected the other papers—that is to say, the bundle of letters, the unfinished book, and the volumes of the

* NOTE.—Wherever the Report touches on the events of the birthday, or of the three days that followed it, compare with Betteredge's Narrative—Chapters VIII. to XIII.

Diary—and enclosed them all in one wrapper, sealed with my own seal. "Promise," he said, "that you will put this into my coffin with your own hand; and that you will see that no other hand touches it afterwards."

I gave him my promise. And the promise has been performed.

He asked me to do one other thing for him—which it cost me a hard struggle to comply with. He said, "Let my grave be forgotten. Give me your word of honour that you will allow no monument of any sort—not even the commonest tombstone—to mark the place of my burial. Let me sleep, nameless. Let me rest, unknown." When I tried to plead with him to alter his resolution, he became for the first, and only time, violently agitated. I could not bear to see it; and I gave way. Nothing but a little grass mound, marks the place of his rest. In time, the tombstones will rise round it. And the people who come after us will look, and wonder, at the nameless grave.

As I have told you, for six hours before his death his sufferings ceased. He dozed a little. I think he dreamed. Once or twice, he smiled. A woman's name, as I suppose—the name of "Ella"—was often on his lips at this time. A few minutes before the end came, he asked me to lift him on his pillow, to see the sun rise through the window. He was very weak. His head fell on my shoulder. He whispered "It's coming!" Then he said, "Kiss me!" I kissed his forehead. On a sudden, he lifted his head. The sunlight touched his face. A beautiful expression, an angelic expression, came over it. He cried out three times, "Peace! peace! peace!" His head sank back again on my shoulder, and the long trouble of his life was at an end.

So he has gone from us. This was, as I think, a great man—though the world never knew him. He bore a hard life bravely. He had the sweetest temper I have ever met with. The loss of him makes me feel very lonely. Perhaps I have never been quite myself again since my illness. Sometimes, I think of giving up my practice, and going away, and trying what some of the foreign baths and waters will do for me.

It is reported here, that you and Miss Verinder are to be married next month. Please to accept my best congratulations.

The pages of my poor friend's Journal are waiting for you at my house—sealed up, with your name on the wrapper. I was afraid to trust them to the post.

My best respects and good wishes attend Miss Verinder. I remain, dear Mr. Franklin Blake, truly yours, THOMAS CANDY.

EIGHTH NARRATIVE.

Contributed by Gabriel Betteredge.

I AM the person (as you remember, no doubt) who led the way in these pages, and opened the story. I am also the person who is left behind, as it were, to close the story up.

Let nobody suppose that I have any last words to say here, concerning the Indian Diamond. I hold that unlucky jewel in abhorrence—and I refer you to other authority than mine, for such news of the Moonstone as you may, at the present time, be expecting to receive. My purpose, in this place, is to state a fact in the history of the family, which has been passed over by everybody, and which I won't allow to be disrespectfully smothered up in that way. The fact to which I allude is—the marriage of Miss Rachel and Mr. Franklin Blake. This interesting event took place at our house in Yorkshire, on Tuesday, October ninth, eighteen hundred and forty-nine. I had a new suit of clothes on the occasion. And the married couple went to spend the honeymoon in Scotland.

Family festivals having been rare enough at our house, since my poor mistress's death, I own—on this occasion of the wedding—to having (towards the latter part of the day) taken a drop too much on the strength of it.

If you have ever done the same sort of thing yourself, you will understand and feel for me. If you have not, you will very likely say, "Disgusting old man! why does he tell us this?" The reason why is now to come.

Having, then, taken my drop (bless you! you have got your favourite vice, too; only your vice isn't mine, and mine isn't your's), I next applied the one infallible remedy—that remedy being, as you know, Robinson Crusoe. Where I opened that unrivalled book, I can't say. Where the lines of print at last left off running into each other, I know, however, perfectly well. It was at page three hundred and eighteen—a domestic bit concerning Robinson Crusoe's marriage, as follows:

"With those Thoughts, I considered my new Engagement, that I had a Wife"—(Observe! so had Mr. Franklin!)—"one Child born"—(Observe again! that might yet be Mr. Franklin's case, too!)—"and my Wife then"—What Robinson Crusoe's wife did, or did not do, "then," I felt no desire to discover. I scored the bit about the Child with my pencil, and put a morsel of paper for a mark to keep the place: "Lie you there," I said, "till the marriage of Mr. Franklin and Miss Rachel is some months older—and then we'll see!"

The months passed (more than I had bargained for), and no occasion presented itself for disturbing that mark in the book. It was not till this present month of November, eighteen hundred and fifty, that Mr. Franklin came into my room, in high good spirits, and said, "Betteredged! I have got some news for you! Something is going to happen in the house, before we are many months older."

"Does it concern the family, sir?" I asked.

"It decidedly concerns the family," says Mr. Franklin.

"Has your good lady anything to do with it, if you please, sir?"

"She has a great deal to do with it," says Mr. Franklin, beginning to look a little surprised.

"You needn't say a word more, sir," I answered. "God bless you both! I'm heartily glad to hear it."

Mr. Franklin stared like a person thunder-struck. "May I venture to inquire where you got your information?" he asked. "I only got mine (imparted in the strictest secrecy) five minutes since."

Here was an opportunity of producing Robinson Crusoe! Here was a chance of reading that domestic bit about the child which I had marked on the day of Mr. Franklin's marriage! I read those miraculous words with an emphasis which did them justice—and then I looked him severely in the face. "Now, sir, do you believe in Robinson Crusoe?" I asked, with a solemnity suitable to the occasion.

"Betteridge!" says Mr. Franklin, with equal solemnity, "I'm convinced at last." He shook hands with me—and I felt that I had converted him.

With the relation of this extraordinary circumstance, my re-appearance in these pages comes to an end. Let nobody laugh at the unique anecdote here related. You are welcome to be as merry as you please over everything else I have written. But when I write of Robinson Crusoe, by the Lord it's serious—and I request you to take it accordingly!

When this is said, all is said. Ladies and gentlemen, I make my bow, and shut up the story.

EPILOGUE.

THE FINDING OF THE DIAMOND.

I.

THE STATEMENT OF SERGEANT CUFF'S MAN, (1849).

On the twenty-seventh of June last, I received instructions from Sergeant Cuff to follow three men; suspected of murder, and described as Indians. They had been seen on the Tower Wharf, that morning, embarking on board the steamer bound for Rotterdam.

I left London, by a steamer belonging to another company, which sailed on the morning of Thursday, the twenty-eighth.

Arriving at Rotterdam, I succeeded in finding the commander of the Wednesday's steamer. He informed me that the Indians had certainly been passengers on board his vessel—but as far as Gravesend only. Off that place, one of the three had inquired at what time they would reach Calais. On being informed that the steamer was bound to Rotterdam, the spokesman of the party expressed the greatest surprise and distress at the mistake which he and his two friends had made. They were all willing (he said) to sacrifice their passage money, if the commander of the steamer would only put them ashore. Commiserating their position, as foreigners in a strange land, and knowing no reason for detaining them, the commander signalled for a shore boat, and the three men left the vessel.

This proceeding of the Indians having been

plainly resolved on beforehand, as a means of preventing their being traced, I lost no time in returning to England. I left the steamer at Gravesend, and discovered that the Indians had gone from that place to London. Thence, I again traced them, as having left for Plymouth. Inquiries made at Plymouth, proved that they had sailed, forty-eight hours previously, in the Bewley Castle East Indiaman, bound direct for Bombay.

On receiving this intelligence, Sergeant Cuff caused the authorities at Bombay to be communicated with, overland—so that the vessel might be boarded by the police immediately on her entering the port. This step having been taken, my connection with the matter came to an end. I have heard nothing more of it since that time.

II.

THE STATEMENT OF THE CAPTAIN, (1849).

I am requested by Sergeant Cuff to set in writing certain facts, concerning three men (believed to be Hindoos) who were passengers, last summer, in the ship Bewley Castle, bound for Bombay direct, under my command.

The Hindoos joined us at Plymouth. On the passage out, I heard no complaint of their conduct. They were berthed in the forward part of the vessel. I had but few occasions myself of personally noticing them.

In the latter part of the voyage, we had the misfortune to be becalmed, for three days and nights, off the coast of India. I have not got the ship's Journal to refer to, and I cannot now call to mind the latitude and longitude. As to our position, therefore, I am only able to state generally that the currents drifted us in towards the land, and that when the wind found us again, we reached our port in twenty-four hours afterwards.

The discipline of a ship (as all sea-faring persons know) becomes relaxed in a long calm. The discipline of my ship became relaxed. Certain gentlemen among the passengers got some of the smaller boats lowered, and amused themselves by rowing about, and swimming, when the sun, at evening time, was cool enough to let them divert themselves in that way. The boats, when done with, ought to have been slung up again in their places. Instead of this, they were left moored to the ship's side. What with the heat, and what with the vexation of the weather, neither officers nor men seemed to be in heart for their duty while the calm lasted.

On the third night, nothing unusual was heard or seen by the watch on deck. When the morning came, the smallest of the boats was missing—and the three Hindoos were next reported to be missing too.

If these men had stolen the boat shortly after dark (which I have no doubt they did) we were near enough to the land to make it vain to send in pursuit of them, when the discovery was made in the morning. I have no doubt they got ashore, in that calm weather

(making all due allowance for fatigue and clumsy rowing), before daybreak.

On reaching our port, I there learnt, for the first time, the reason my three passengers had for seizing their opportunity of escaping from the ship. I could only make the same statement to the authorities which I have made here. They considered me to blame for allowing the discipline of the vessel to be relaxed. I have expressed my regret on this score to them, and to my owners. Since that time, nothing has been heard, to my knowledge, of the three Hindoos. I have no more to add to what is here written.

III.

THE STATEMENT OF MR. MURTHWAITE, (1850).

(In a Letter to Mr. Bruff.)

Have you any recollection, my dear sir, of a semi-savage person whom you met out at dinner, in London, in the autumn of 'forty-eight? Permit me to remind you that the person's name was Murthwaite, and that you and he had a long conversation together after dinner. The talk related to an Indian Diamond, called The Moonstone, and to a conspiracy then in existence to get possession of the gem.

Since that time, I have been wandering in Central Asia. Thence, I have drifted back to the scene of some of my past adventures in the north and north-west of India. About a fortnight since, I found myself in a certain district or province (but little known to Europeans) called Kattiawar.

Here, an adventure befel me, in which (incredible as it may appear) you are personally interested.

In the wild regions of Kattiawar (and how wild they are you will understand, when I tell you that even the husbandmen plough the land armed to the teeth), the population is fanatically devoted to the old Hindoo religion—to the ancient worship of Brahmah and Vishnu. The few Mahomedan families, thinly scattered about the villages in the interior, are afraid to taste meat of any kind. A Mahomedan even suspected of killing that sacred animal, the cow, is, as a matter of course, put to death without mercy in these parts, by the pious Hindoo neighbours who surround him. To strengthen the religious enthusiasm of the people, two of the most famous shrines of Hindoo pilgrimage are contained within the boundaries of Kattiawar. One of them is Dwarka, the birthplace of the god Krishna. The other is the sacred city of Somnauth—sacked and destroyed, as long since as the eleventh century, by the Mahomedan conqueror, Mahmoud of Ghizni.

Finding myself, for the second time, in these romantic regions, I resolved not to leave Kattiawar, without looking once more on the magnificent desolation of Somnauth. At the place where I planned to do this, I was (as nearly as I could calculate it) some three days

distant, journeying on foot, from the sacred city.

I had not been long on the road, before I noticed, that other people—by twos and threes—appeared to be travelling in the same direction as myself.

To such of these as spoke to me, I gave myself out as a Hindoo-Buddhist, from a distant province, bound on a pilgrimage. It is needless to say that my dress was of the sort to carry out this description. Add, that I know the language as well as I know my own, and that I am lean enough and brown enough to make it no easy matter to detect my European origin—and you will understand that I passed muster with the people readily: not as one of themselves, but as a stranger from a distant part of their own country.

On the second day, the number of Hindoos travelling in my direction, had increased to fifties and hundreds. On the third day, the throng had swollen to thousands; all slowly converging to one point—the city of Somnauth.

A trifling service which I was able to render to one of my fellow-pilgrims, during the third day's journey, proved the means of introducing me to certain Hindoos of the higher caste. From these men I learnt that the multitude was on its way to a great religious ceremony, which was to take place on a hill at a little distance from Somnauth. The ceremony was in honour of the god of the Moon; and it was to be held at night.

The crowd detained us, as we drew near to the place of celebration. By the time we reached the hill, the moon was high in the heavens. My Hindoo friends possessed some special privileges which enabled them to gain access to the shrine. They kindly allowed me to accompany them. When we arrived at the place, we found the shrine hidden from our view, by a curtain hung between two magnificent trees. Beneath the trees, a flat projection of rock jutted out, and formed a species of natural platform. Below this, I stood, in company with my Hindoo friends.

Looking back down the hill, the view presented the grandest spectacle of Nature and Man, in combination, that I have ever seen. The lower slopes of the eminence melted imperceptibly into a grassy plain, the place of the meeting of three rivers. On one side, the graceful winding of the waters stretched away, now visible, now hidden by trees, as far as the eye could see. On the other, the waveless ocean slept in the calm of the night. People this lovely scene with tens of thousands of human creatures, all dressed in white, stretching down the sides of the hill, overflowing into the plain, and fringing the nearer banks of the winding rivers. Light this halt of the pilgrims, by the wild red flames of cressets and torches, streaming up at intervals from every part of the innumerable throng. Imagine the moonlight of the East, pouring in unclouded glory over all—and you will form some idea of

the view that met me, when I looked forth from the summit of the hill.

A strain of plaintive music, played on stringed instruments and flutes, recalled my attention to the hidden shrine.

I turned, and saw on the rocky platform, the figures of three men. In the central figure of the three, I recognised the man to whom I had spoken in England, when the Indians appeared on the terrace at Lady Verinder's house. The other two, who had been his companions on that occasion, were no doubt his companions also on this.

One of the Hindoos, near whom I was standing, saw me start. In a whisper, he explained to me the apparition of the three figures on the platform of rock.

They were Brahmins (he said) who had forfeited their caste, in the service of the god. The god had commanded that their purification should be the purification by pilgrimage. On that night, the three men were to part. In three separate directions, they were to set forth as pilgrims to the shrines of India. Never more were they to look on each other's faces. Never more were they to rest on their wanderings, from the day which witnessed their separation, to the day which witnessed their death.

As those words were whispered to me, the plaintive music ceased. The three men prostrated themselves on the rock, before the curtain which hid the shrine. They rose—they looked on one another—they embraced. Then they descended separately among the people. The people made way for them in dead silence. In three different directions, I saw the crowd part, at one and the same moment. Slowly, the grand white mass of the people closed together again. The track of the doomed men through the ranks of their fellow mortals was obliterated. We saw them no more.

A new strain of music, loud and jubilant, rose from the hidden shrine. The crowd around me shuddered and pressed together.

The curtain between the trees was drawn aside, and the shrine was disclosed to view.

There, raised high on a throne; seated on his typical antelope, with his four arms stretching towards the four corners of the earth—there soared above us, dark and awful in the mystic light of heaven, the god of the Moon. And there, in the forehead of the deity, gleamed the yellow Diamond, whose splendour had last shone on me, in England, from the bosom of a woman's dress!

Yes! after the lapse of eight centuries, the Moonstone looks forth once more over the walls of the sacred city in which its story first began. How it has found its way back to its wild native land—by what accident, or by what crime, the Indians regained possession of their sacred gem, may be in your knowledge, but is not in mine. You have lost sight of it in England, and (if I know anything of this people) you have lost sight of it for ever.

So the years pass, and repeat each other; so

the same events revolve in the cycles of Time. What will be the next adventures of The Moonstone? Who can tell!

THE END.

CARNIVAL TIME IN BRITANY.

AT daybreak one crisp February morning, we entered the quaint old city of Nantes, escorted by a motley caravan of peasants, who were wending their way with their various stock to the market square on the quays. After we had passed the seven ancient bridges which conduct from the southern bank of the Loire, over as many islands, to the northern bank, whereon the old Breton capital mainly lies; after we had taken a glimpse at the stunted-looking cathedral, which rears its square towers above the city, and had for an instant stopped to gaze at the old ducal castle, standing in an enormous ditch, half below the level of the street;—we reached at length the square on the crest of the hill upon which Nantes is built, where stands, inviting to a rather gloomy hospitality, the Hôtel de France.

Here took place a brief but lively struggle between hunger and weariness; but the garçon having conducted us to one of those almost oppressively comfortable rooms which you find sometimes in provincial France, and having, moreover, imparted to us the fact that breakfast would be served at eleven, and not an instant before, Tompkins abruptly declared for sleep by dropping heavily upon the bed—boots, coat, and all—and sounding a nasal trumpet in honour of tired nature's triumph. I have to thank my companion's snoring for the confused and martial dreams which followed me. Once I thought that the bugle blasts of the Black Prince were sounding in my ear, summoning me to the attack on the old Breton Castle; but I was held back by a crowd of screaming bonnes, with their long lace caps, who raised, with their shrill voices, a perfect pandemonium about my ears. In the midst of all this hubbub I awoke, rubbed my eyes, and turned over. More regularly than the ticks of the fantastic clock on the mantel, sounded still the snores of Tompkins; but an instant after I, lying there wide awake, heard the same screeching of bugles and yelling of bonnes, which I had thought a horrid dream.

I aroused Tompkins.

"Perhaps," said he, a trifle pale,—"perhaps it is a revolution!"

This gave a practical turn to the matter, and it luckily happened, that the garçon just then summoned us to breakfast.

"But what is all this hubbub?" asked I, in the choicest of "conversation-book" French.

"In the square, monsieur?" said the stolid Breton, as if nothing unusual were going on.

"Of course."

"To-morrow is the Mercredi des Cendres, monsieur," in a tone which expressed, "You're a noodle not to know it."

What to-morrow had to do with to-day's uproar, I could not exactly see, and so I intimated to him.

"The day before Ash Wednesday, monsieur, is Carnival day; therefore it is the Carnival which has disturbed Messieurs les Anglais."

You must know that Nantes, on all the days of the year excepting two, is the most droning, humdrum, stupid, sleepy old town between Biscay and the Bosphorus. But the two days when the ex-capital of Britany is galvanised into something resembling a wide-awake city, are the Sunday and the Tuesday before the beginning of Lent.

We hastily consumed the conventional Breton breakfast which was set before us—the soup and St. Emilion, the fried fish and filet de bœuf, the sour bread and preserves, the shrimps and watercresses—and Tompkins, for once, in his anxiety to get out, forgot to grumble at the absence of coffee.

A Nantes merchant, who was a bachelor and lived at the hotel, hearing our conversation, politely offered to show us the sights.

"I beg you, messieurs," said he, in the grand Breton style, "not to wear holiday suits."

"Why not?"

"Because," he replied, smiling, "orange juice gives a somewhat unpleasant variety to the colour of one's cloth."

Later in the day we knew what he meant, to our cost.

Accompanied by our new friend, we passed from the hotel court into the square. The steps of the theatre opposite were covered with a perfect forest of bonnes' caps. The tops of the houses, the balconies and windows, and the side-walks, were crowded with lookers-on, who were boisterously enjoying the scene. Here was a totally new phase of the Breton character, which I had thought, from previous experience, stolid and phlegmatic. It was not such a scene as you witness in the bal masqué at the Paris Opera. It was more free and boisterous, more overflowing with homely fun; far more original in the costumes, the antics, and the contagious high spirits of the actors. I almost shrank back into the sheltered precincts of the hotel, as I saw a party of screaming bonnes come rushing towards where we stood, blowing their tin trumpets and waving their brawny arms. Groups of men and women and boys were scattered over the square, in every conceivable disguise, and performing every conceivable caper, crowding and hustling and shouting, maliciously pursuing the bonnes who were not disguised, but had only come out to see the fun, lustily blowing uncouth horns, and each trying to outvie the others. Perhaps the most amusing of all were the multitudes of little wild gamins—poor ragged urchins, whose home is the street, whose bed is the doorstep, and whose food comes how and when chance ordains—and chimney-sweepers, with their sooty merry faces; these held high orgies in the streets.

After observing the scene in front of the hotel

awhile, our obliging Breton friend conducted us through the long and narrow Rue Crebillon, the main thoroughfare of Nantes, which was already so crowded with masquers and spectators that we moved with great difficulty, and were persecuted by the merry-makers at every step. The old houses were supplied, on every story, with long iron balconies; and upon one of these we took up our position. From the point at which we stood, we could sweep with our eyes the whole street, terminating in a square at either end; and here it was that we saw the Carnival in all its glory.

Tompkins, despite the benevolent warning of monsieur, our friend, had insisted on wearing the shining silk hat which he had just purchased at Bordeaux; for he is somewhat foppish, and had caught sight of the damsels who, in jaunty French costumes, filled windows in every direction. We had hardly taken our places on the balcony when poor Tompkins's hat danced off sportively in mid-air, closely pursued by a shattered orange, until both were lost sight of in the surging crowd beneath.

We were now pelted with a storm of the same too juicy fruit, which came from right and left of us. Orange women, with huge basketsful of their popular stock, were pressing to and fro in the throng, selling their oranges by the dozen at a time, while the air was thick with the yellow fruit as it sped to and from the balconies. It was an equal warfare between man and man; the strongest arm and truest eye were sure of the victory. On the balconies on either side of the street might be seen groups of jauntily dressed gentlemen, each with his stock of oranges; and when any peculiarly amusing masquers passed in the line of vehicles, these would open the battle by pouring down upon them fruity hail. Then would ensue a most vigorous retort, the carriage of the attacked party stopping, and delaying the whole procession until they had "had it out." Tompkins was in a measure consoled by seeing hats, but now as glossy as his own, flying crushed in every direction, and falling to the ground, trodden to flatness by the crowd. Now, the ridiculously long proboscis of some Carnival Achilles is whisked off and sent flying yards away; now, a monkish beard is shaven close and clean, and its loosened hairs fall in a shower over the people round about. Sometimes, the combatants, with their stubborn Celtic blood, are goaded to a momentary warmth on either side; then the oranges fly thick and fast and at haphazard, and are thrown, in the blindness of sudden cholera, furiously into the crowd at large; where, mayhap, they yield their fragrance on the person of an unoffending priest, as in long gown and broad-brimmed hat he hastens nervously along; or attack some pompous old coachman, in wig and livery, who, as he is soberly conducting his master's carriage through the throng, receives an orange plump in the eye, or, before he knows it, finds his gold-banded hat missing from its horsehair pinnacle.

But these orange battles were not confined

to manly combatants; there were Amazonian jousts, which threw the others far into the shade. Now and then a squad of gendarmes would rush in upon a party of combatants, and with loud voices and much gesticulation seek to end the fray—for this orange peltting is really against the law—but then the opponents of those thus interfered with, would pour down a resistless volley upon the agents of order, who would thereon ignominiously retreat. No one was safe from the juicy missiles, which flew to and fro as far as the eye could see on either side; and the screaming, and laughing, and howling, and “sacrrre-bleu”-ing could be heard echoing everywhere through the narrow streets of the usually drowsy old town.

The shops were all closed, excepting that here and there some enterprising tradesman had lent out his windows (at a napoleon a-piece); the church bells were ringing lustily; over the public buildings the national tricolour had been raised in honour of the festivity; and every now and then would emerge from some side street a long train of peasants, in the quaint costume of their district, who had trudged, mayhap, some dozen miles that morning, to have their share of the Carnival frolic. In the street which lay below us, narrow, and enclosed between six and seven-story houses, a rolling, running, shouting crowd were tiding this way and that, without method or distinction; a mosaic of peasants and shopkeepers, of portly old aristocrats and blue-blouses, of boys and policemen, of devils and crusaders, harlequins and Turks, Bottoms and bandits—the scene and colour changing with kaleidoscopic swiftness; a pandemonium of noises, from the famous Breton fish cry, to the discordant squeaks of violins and the many-keyed caterwauling of the less musical mass. In the midst of the crowd struggled painfully the long line of vehicles which made up the procession of the Carnival. These were of every imaginable sort; there were the carriages and four of the prefect and of the mayor, sandwiched between boxes on wheels and rustic donkey carts; there were the stately lookers-on from the aristocratic Cour St. Pierre, and the humble but witty masquers from the neighbouring villages. Mingled together, and jumbled into an almost indistinguishable mass, was this medley of classes, for one day democratically free and equal, enjoying that “one touch of nature,” love of humour, which “makes the whole world kin.” I never shall forget Monsieur the Prefect, as he sat in his carriage with its heraldic blazon, its powdered and gold fringed coachman and footman, with a half-embarrassed smile upon his face; while all about him was this weird mass of boisterous masquers, waging their orange war, and giving to the picture of official dignity a most ludicrous frame indeed. The vehicles which contained the masquers were laughable enough. Now, you would see a moving castle, with its bastions, its turrets, its port holes, and its donjon-keep; and from its towers, burlesque knights in cuirass and helmet,

would pelt right and left, supplied with an armoury of oranges; while their paper shields would soon yield to the energetic response of the balconies above. Next, would come an imitation house, out of whose windows masculine bonnes were leaning and fighting with Amazonian force. Anon, you would observe a countryman, in the costume of some remote village, prancing along on his donkey, and mimicking to the life rustic angularity. A favourite joke seemed to be to imitate the street beggars who were familiar to the town. There was a cart fitted up as a circus; and here were chattering clowns, and mock acrobats, and pretentious ballet dancers, ludicrously like. There were men dressed as bonnes, who rushed about with bonne-like nervousness, and seized the opportunity to kiss the genuine bonnes (provided they were pretty), who were so unlucky as to come in their way. One little urchin, besmirched from top to toe, who was mounted on a donkey cart, whisked off a gendarme's chapeau, and clapped it on his own stubby head, replacing it by his greasy and fragmentary cap; then rode dancing off, screaming with glee; while the guardian of order, inclined to be severely indignant, yet unable to resist the infectious merriment about him, hastened laughing after him.

One of the spectrums that whisked by, was a sheaf of corn, whose ears flapped to and fro in harmony with its movement, and which showed certain very clear indications of being a sheaf of the gentler sex. In the midst of the procession was a Tower of Babel, with little figures of workmen employed in erecting that piece of presumptuous architecture. Here, stalked by an apparently marble pedestal, which anon would stop, and stand stock still, as if it had been rooted to the spot for ages; and confidential couples, who had something *very* particular to say, would conceal themselves behind it, the occupant of the pedestal listening with great glee to their muttered confidences. The variety of illustrations from natural history—the bears, and kangaroos, and gorillas, and giraffes—would have shamed the Zoological Gardens; while the Grand Exposition was well nigh outdone by the representatives of all nations, who hurried along. Underneath the windows, where the Breton belles sat laughing at the scene, a group of serenaders, decked in romantic costumes, would stop, and howl forth a burlesque lute scene from Don Giovanni; while, at a little distance, some dancers, setting a table on the side-walk, would proceed to perform thereon a rollicking “break-down,” to the general delight.

And so round and round, for four mortal hours, this quaint procession wound, and the thousands of throats, becoming hoarser and hoarser as the day advanced, sustained their unremitting hubbub. At length the carriages and the donkey-carts, the chaises and the castles, as they repassed, showed signs of a long and severe siege. There were oranges and orange-juice everywhere; broken pieces of

orange lay in piles within them, and stuck to their wheels and sides; the dresses, hats, and faces were covered with the yellow stain of oranges. The warriors of the day began to look jaded and worn; to take off their heavy hats, stifling and dilapidated masks, and sit limp in their seats, and refresh themselves with wine and rest.

Shortly after four (the Carnival having begun at noon) the crowd began to slacken, vehicles began to drop out of the route, and the procession to show long gaps in its line. Everybody seemed to be hastening to the square and the steps of the theatre, and soon the procession had disappeared, excepting that now and then an unusually persevering party came rollicking up the street, singing some rude Breton song, and trying to provoke one last battle by launching the flattened oranges, which yet remained, at the tired crowd. By this time the masquers were somewhat the worse—or, considering their greater vivacity and humour, perhaps somewhat the better—for the white wine, which is freely drunk, as may be imagined, on Carnival day; and in the square, and on the portico of the theatre, the orgie was still kept up, until the thick dusk of a moonless February evening threw a damper on the revellers, and sent them reeling, singing, frolicking homeward.

"A curious sight," remarked Tompkins, as we descended, and passed into the street, "but after a fellow has been travelling all night, a little too long to keep one's interest alive. I'm glad it's over."

"Over?" said our Breton friend, with a shrug and lifted eyebrows. "Then monsieur does not care to see how they finish the Carnival?"

"By Jove! Is there anything more?"

"If monsieur is not too tired, after dinner, we will go to one of the cabarets, and see the Carnival dance."

Tompkins consented with a grunt; for, tired as he might be, he was determined, as he said, "to have his money's worth out of these Frenchmen."

We passed through a zig-zag labyrinth of narrow streets and dingy alleys, and finally descended to a cellar some steps below the level of the street, where we found ourselves in a buvette, with a sanded floor, and where some labourers were busy drinking the favourite white wine. Our guide led us along a dark narrow passage to a long, low-studded, rudely-built hall, with brick floor, and tallow candles disposed at rare intervals along the wall. The guests were of the working classes, and were dressed in their every-day attire, the long lace coils of the damsels being conspicuous everywhere. We had just taken our seats when a portly, jovial old fellow, his head surmounted by a square paper cap, entered, followed by two garçons, who brought in a large table, and set it in the middle of the room. Anon the landlord reappeared with a huge bowl, from whence a savoury steam arose and filled the air. Shouts of delight greeted the good cheer; glasses were quickly filled; while a great brawny fellow with shaggy red

hair, jumped upon the table, and gesticulating as only a Frenchman can, burst into a loud, wild drinking song. When he came to the chorus—which was something about oh yes, we'll drink till the dawn, or some sentiment equally original—it was roared out lustily by the rest; men and women jumped on the table and waved their hands, or danced with a wild glee which was positively catching. Another round of punch brought out, in spite of the law, the glorious Marseillaise, which sounded even grandly, so fervid were the voices, and so earnest the faces. The drinking over, the table was quickly pushed aside, the floor was swept, and partners were chosen. Two sprightly blue-bloused fellows stationed themselves on a raised bench, with fiddle and trumpet, and forthwith struck up a lively waltz. And such waltzing as ensued! Without rhyme or method, these lusty folk whirled off at every angle, regardless of consequences, and wholly given up to the moment's ecstacy. Now and then there would be a general over tumbling, couple after couple coming to the ground, and presenting to the beholder a confused spectacle of petticoats and cotton stockings hopelessly mixed up with blue blouses and wooden shoes. The revel ended with a grand jig, a combination of an Irish jig and fashionable ballet, performed by a blue blouse and a *bonne*. So frantically did they distort their bodies, and pose themselves; the man throwing the girl over his shoulder, she kneeling and he bounding over her head; that every moment you almost expected them to fall to pieces. The man, as he danced, smoked a long cigar; and now and then a long puff of smoke, issuing from his mouth, produced a very ludicrous effect.

AT THE CLUB WINDOW.

I. POCOUCRANTE.

SITTING alone at the window,
I watch the crowd of people,
And study as they pass me
The warp and woof of life;
Woven with good and evil,
With sorrow and rejoicing,
With peace and true affection,
With agony and strife.

I think as the old men saunter,
Of the pangs they all have suffered,
In the hard up-mountain struggle,
To the bare and frosty cope:
Of their patience and endurance,
And the victory snatched from Fortune,
Out of the pangs of death,
Or at best forlornest hope.

I think, neither sad nor happy,
But filled with a vague surmising,
That the young men strutting so proudly
Must run the self-same race;
No pity for the hindmost,
And much applause for the foremost;
Applause and pity both idle,
To the heart not right in its place.

I think as Lazarus passes,
That perhaps he has had his chances,
And knew not how to use them,
To make himself rich and great,
And lift himself up to the summit,
Too dizzy, perchance, to be envied,
But proud enough to scorn
All men of meaner estate.

I think that Dives flaunting
His riches in the sunshine,
May owe his gold to his fathers,
Not a penny to himself,
And that all things taken together,
Men are but busy spiders;
That Fate the busier housewife
Leaves on, or sweeps off the shelf.

But I neither laugh nor sigh
At the rights or wrongs I witness;
I take the world as it passes
And would mend it if I might.
But as I cannot, I may not,
And so go home to my pillow,
And wrap myself in the blankets,
And wish it a calm good night.

II. THE DEMI-SEMI LUNATIC.

Says Fate to the Fated,
"Unravel my skein."
Says the Fated to Fate
"Twere eternally vain."
Says Body to Soul,
"We are mysteries twain."
"Wherein do we differ?"
Says Pleasure to Pain;
"Are not living and dying
Mere links in a chain?
And is not the antidote
Part of the bane?"
Unriddle my riddle
Oh sphinx of the plain!
It weighs on my spirit
It addles my brain.

III. THE ANGRY PESSIMIST.

You prefer a buffoon to a scholar,
A harlequin to a teacher,
A jester to a statesman,
An Anonyma flaring on horseback
To a modest and spotless woman—
Brute of a public!

You think that to sneer shows wisdom,
That a gibe undervalues a reason.
That slang, such as thieves delight in,
Is fit for the lips of the gentle,
And rather a grace than a blemish,
Thick headed public!

You think that if merit's exalted
'Tis excellent sport to decry it,
And trail its good name in the gutter;
And that cynics, white-gloved and cravated,
Are the cream and quintessence of all things,
Ass of a public!

You think that success is a merit,
That honour and virtue and courage
Are all very well in their places,
But that money's a thousand times better;
Detestable, stupid, degraded,
Pig of a public!

IV. THE EPICUREAN.

What is the use of plodding,
Plodding for ever and ever,
To gain the bright half million,
That shall lift us above the crowd?
And dying, a full nine-tenths of us
Without a sole enjoyment,
Worthy a true man's taking,
By kindly Heaven allowed?

I'm not afraid to be humble,
For though my fortune's little
I make that little suffice
For the pleasures it can buy:
A pint of Claret or Rhenish,
Or a well-cooked dish in season,
A book, a gem, or a picture,
To please the mind and eye.

I've something to spare for the needy
Who make no trade of their sorrow,
And as much as half my income
For the wants of the friends I love;
And I pity and laugh at the selfish
And self-degrading zanies,
Who look so much beneath them,
That they cannot see above.

It signifies little—thinking—
So I shall go home to dinner,
And drinking a flask of Burgundy
The King and the Pope of wine;
I'll pledge my love (my wife),
Like "rare old Ben" in the ditty,
Who left a kiss in the goblet,
As I can do in mine.

I'll laugh: we'll laugh and be happy,
And free of hatred and envy,
We'll think in our single mindedness
That we are truly wise;
And if we are not—what matters?
For if love and satisfaction
Be not the best of wisdom,
I care not where wisdom lies.

PLAIN ENGLISH.

IF every other part of life in this island of ours be (as we are by some expected to believe) perfect, our method of teaching is defective, and sadly defective; painfully out of the straight line, and immeasurably below the ideal point. Our school-books seem written for children not to understand, rather than to make difficult things easy to them, and obscure things plain. Dry details from which every pictorial fact has been cut out; dull catalogues of mere words to which no living interest is attached; dates without a single dramatic incident to help towards the remembering of them; lists of battles and of kings, for history; lists of chief towns, of departments, of rivers, and of vague and awful "boundaries," for geography; these are the cheerful means by which we endeavour to make children love their books, and think learning better than houses or lands. It is one of the strange contradictions of human nature, that we go on seeing evils, and lamenting them, but never attempt to remedy them. We know that our method of teaching the young, our school-books, and our range of

lessons, are all equally preposterous, and yet we do nothing to mend them. It seems as if we believed in some wholesome influence of mental pain. As though, by making knowledge especially difficult we made it especially valuable, and planted the seeds effectually, in proportion to the anguish of the operation!

There are four things which may be taken as the cardinal points of education—grammar, arithmetic, history, and geography; four names of torture to the young, but which, under any rational system of teaching, might be made four sources of pleasure and interest. As for grammar, which is the only one of the four to be touched on here, one might think that some intellectual Herod had been the compiler of most of the published treatises; and that his object was the hopeless bewildering of youthful brains, and the final snuffing out of youthful intellectual light. Yet even grammar might be made full of what artists call colour, if we chose to study the best way of setting it forth. Certainly that way is not to be found in Lindley Murray; with his dull rattle rattling against the mind, like dry bones; without a morsel of flesh to cover their anatomy; nor yet is the way to be found in some of the modern issues, which are even more pedantic than Lindley Murray, and infinitely more bewildering. Here are two instances of modern grammar-writing. In one little work, otherwise sensible, the following classification of adverbs is commended to the young learner: "*Adverbs of quality, of affirmation, of contingency, of negation, of explaining, of separation, of conjunction, of interrogation, of pre-eminence, of defect, of preference, of equality, of inequality, of gradation, of in a place, of to a place, of toward a place, of from a place, of time present, of time past, of time future, of time indefinitely, of time definitely, of order, and of quantity.*"* Another author of a practical grammar, divides adverbs into nine classes, and conjunctions into sixteen. Among these, are adverbs that express *manner by quality, manner by degree, and manner by affirmation*—whatever these terms may mean. Among the conjunctions, are conjunctions of *purpose, of condition, of concession, and so on.* When teachers attempt to cram such indigestible material as this into the tender brains of youth, who can wonder if those brains obstinately and vehemently refuse to be fed upon the husks and chaff offered them for food? Who can expect any other than the general result of ordinary schooling, which is, that boys and girls will do their best to forget all that their masters and mistresses have made believe to teach them, and that the real education begins when the "scholastic courses" end?

Almost all grammar-writers have a great dislike to short words instead of long words, and to Saxon words instead of Latin words. You must "accumulate," not "heap up," if you would

please them; you must "exclude," not "shut out;" you must "commence," not "begin;" you must "be profound," rather than "deep;" and you must be very particular to be "implied in a certain transaction," instead of "mixed up in some matter." One grammarian sets his face against "by dint of argument," "not a whit better," "the tables are turned," &c., as wanting in that vague virtue called purity of style; another advises, as a more elegant mode of diction, "I prefer mercy to sacrifice," instead of "I will have mercy and not sacrifice;" and thinks "he violated his promise," infinitely better style than "he broke his word." "The devouring element" is high-polite for "fire;" "he gave utterance to a sentiment," is far before the plain "he said;" "to signify assent," beats the sturdy "Yes" all to nothing. Even a great preacher—great in eloquence, great in goodness, great in mind—maundered once into "the source of light dispersing its rays," when all he wanted to say was simply "the sunshine."

Grammar-writers, and the teachers of grammar, do even more than this. Not content with taking all the pith and marrow out of the English language, and making it a mere anglicised Latin (so far as they are able), they still further perplex the youthful learner by the gnarled and hopeless subject of their theses. "Which do you prefer, a classical or commercial education? State your reasons." This is one of the questions calmly put to the boy of twelve or fourteen for whom this grammar is written. "What inferences are you entitled to draw from the extension of railways to all parts of the country?" is another question. "Prove a future state of rewards and punishments," is a third tickler. "The first request is an impossible one," says Mr. Meiklejohn, from whom these extracts are quoted; the second is absurd and senseless; and the third is surely beyond the powers of most grown-up people. Answers are likewise expected to such questions as these: "Is Law or Physic more advantageous?" "Is Agriculture or Commerce preferable?" Considering the experience of fourteen years of age, these questions are certainly occasions for the exercise of some imagination.

But to go back to grammar, pure and simple. We all know what utter weariness of spirit, what headaches, confusion of mind, moral prostration, and personal disgrace, what rivulets of tears, and dire punishments of various kinds, have marked the path of those Juggernauts of the school-room—the makers of grammars written not to be understood. And yet this most painful of all the dry sticks given to the young to transform into a flowering branch, might be made interesting if treated as it ought to be treated; that is, in connexion with history and other matters having some relation to human life. Any one who has taught intelligently, or seen intelligent teaching, in a school, must remember with what delight children receive lessons which are made dramatic or pictorial. The dullest fact, if helped out with

* Quoted from a lecture (What is and What may be Meant by Teaching English), by J. M. D. Meiklejohn, M.A.

any collateral information connecting it with human life or animate existence, has a charm for the young that at once fixes it in their memories; and a dense-witted, wearied, yawning class can be brightened up into a little circle of bright-eyed listeners all agape for knowledge, if the teacher strike out of the stupid old droning track, and begin his next section with an anecdote or an illustration.

There is one part of grammar, at present a terrible weariness and vexation of spirit, which might be made very pleasant reading, and that is the derivation of words. There are better methods of teaching this art and mystery than by mere lists of Greek and Latin roots; and in an admirable section called the Matter of the English Language, Mr. Meiklejohn has shown in his Easy English Grammar how charmingly this subject can be treated. Though our language is an aggregation of many materials, rather than one broad stream flowing from one original source, and merely changing by the way, yet it has a certain inner life of its own which assimilates all these varying materials, and welds them into one harmonious whole. Certainly the manner of construction is somewhat irregular, and the application is not unfrequently strained, but this is because we have never given any serious scientific attention to the creation or preservation of our tongue, but have trusted to chance and haphazard, and the natural cohesion of verbal particles, when once placed in contact with each other. Consequently, a full and exhaustive system of analysis and derivation shows some strange and unlooked-for results. Once all Keltic, we have now comparatively few words of the old tongue left among us. The Thames, the Severn, and the Trent; the Mendip Hills, the Chiltern, and the Malvern; Devon, Wilts, Kent; London, Dover, Liverpool, are all Keltic names of rivers, hills, counties, and towns respectively; so are names of places beginning with Aber, the mouth of a river, as Arbroath, formerly Aberbrothwick, and Aberwick, now Berwick; the names of places beginning with Caer, a fort, as Carlisle, Carnarvon, Caerliffon; with Dun, a hill, as Dumbarton, Dunmore, Huntingdon; with Lin, a deep pool, as Linlithgow, King's Lynn; with Llann, a church, as Llandaff, Llanberis; with Tre, a town, as Coventry (or convent town); with Inver, the mouth of a river, as Inverness, Inverary. Also certain common words are Keltic, as basket, trap, cart, gown, pike, crag, whip, brave, cloud, plaid, crockery, tartan, darn, wire, mattock, mop, rasher, rug, button, crook, kiln, flannel, gyves, gruel, welt, mesh, rail, glue, tackle, coat, pranks, balderdash, happy, pert, sham, and others. The Scandinavian or Norse element is found chiefly in the provincial dialects of Northumberland, Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, Cumberland, and Westmoreland, where we have force for waterfall, greet for weep, ket for carrion, and lile for little; "all of which," says Mr. Meiklejohn, from whom we are quoting, and who is responsible for these assertions, "are pure Scandi-

navian words." In the names of places we have by for village, in Whitby, Grimsby, &c.; fell for hill (Norse fjeld) in Crossfell, Scawfell; gill (this should be spelt ghyll), a ravine, in Ormesgill; Scar, a steep rock, in Scarborough; Tarn, a small deep lake, in Tarnsyke, &c. Had Mr. Meiklejohn been acquainted with the lake country, he could have infinitely enriched and amended his examples, but we have taken what we have found, there being enough to illustrate the principle. There are said to be thirteen hundred and seventy-three names of places in England, of Danish or Norse origin, among which are the islands ending in ey—ey, ea, or æ, being all different forms of the Norse word for an island—as Jersey, Cæsar's Island; Athelney, Noble's Island; Anglesea, island of the Angles, &c.

The greatest addition to our language has been from the Latin, either directly to a small extent, during the Roman occupation from A.D. 43 to 480, or to a large extent when Roman missionaries introduced Christianity among us in A.D. 596; or indirectly, by the introduction of the Norman-French language and literature in the time of Edward the Confessor first, and later, when William the Conqueror came. The Latin element in English comprises ten-fortieths of the whole; the purely English is twenty-five fortieths; and the remaining five-fortieths are made up of Keltic, Greek, Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, Italian, Hindostanee, Spanish, Dutch—in fact, from words of almost every language of the globe. One hundred and fifty-four Greek and Latin roots give thirteen thousand English words. From pono, to place, we have two hundred and fifty words; from plico, to fold, two hundred; from capio, to take, one hundred and ninety-seven; from specio, to see, one hundred and seventy-seven; from mitto, to send, one hundred and seventy-four; from teneo, to hold, one hundred and sixty-eight; from tendo, to stretch, one hundred and sixty-two; from duco, to lead, one hundred and fifty-six; from logos, a word, one hundred and fifty-six; from grapho, to write, one hundred and fifty-two. Yet great as is this classic influence, it is greater in the fixed than in the moving language. We write down in our dictionaries one-fourth or ten-fortieths of Latin words, we speak from thirty-six to thirty-nine-fortieths of Saxon words, and we write from twenty-nine to thirty-eight-fortieths of the same Saxon. In Macaulay's essay on Bacon there are thirty Saxon words out of every forty, while in the New Testament there are thirty-seven. "All the common words of every-day use, all the joints of the language, all that makes it an organism, all the words that express the *life* of individuals or of the nation are pure English. In one word, all that makes a language a language is English; the Latin element merely fills up gaps and interstices."

Another odd and interesting part of grammar is the tracking out of the meanings of words changed by constant application. Thus, gazette, which was once gazetta, a small Venetian coin said to have been the price of the first news-

paper, is now the newspaper itself; bombast, formerly a stuff of soft loose texture, used to stuff out clothes, is now a pompous inflated style; boor, a rustic, is now an ignorant ill-mannered person; villain, a serf, is a wretch; pagan, a villager, is a heathen; lumber, or things formerly stowed away in a Lombard's or banker's room, is now any kind of useless accumulation—in America, timber; treacle was anciently theriac, a remedy against poison, and specially an electuary made of various drugs pounded together and mixed with honey, now it is only molasses, the syrup which runs from sugar; stationer, or a man with a stall or station for selling goods, is a man who sells paper and pens, &c., only; romance, the Roman language, is the kind of fictitious literature originally written in that language; cheque, a chequered cloth for counting money, is a piece of paper representing money; and stool, a chair, is now really a chair for the feet. These are just a few instances of what might be done towards making the study of grammar attractive to the young, and investing nouns and verbs with a human and therefore a living interest.

Another thing rarely taught at all, and never taught well, is the art of correct and beautiful speaking. How few people can read aloud decently, or speak properly and pleasantly! As for accent, the chances are as ninety-nine to a hundred that it will be thrown in the wrong place; as in that famous example of the clergyman who, having to read how Saul after solicitation was persuaded to eat, read it thus: "And the woman had a fat calf in the house, and she hasted and killed it, and took flour, and kneaded it, and did bake unleavened bread thereof. And she brought it before Saul and before his servants, and they DID eat!" Children are never taught to manage the voice in speaking. Singing comes into the category of an art, and therefore attention is paid to it, but speaking is of the natural functions only, and for this nature alone is made answerable. Few nations speak so badly as the English. We all know the clipping, drawing, mouth-shut murmur in which the young man of the period speaks; we all know the sharp, short, asthmatic, catchy way in which some of the girls of the period speak; or that deep chest-voice affected by the more horsey kind; or that shrill head-voice delighted in by the fast sort not specially horsey; or that thin half-whining voice which some of the more quiet and modest kind seem to think part of their quietness, and essential to their modesty. The great aim of most young people seems to be to clip off their words as many letters and syllables as they possibly can, and to make what remains as indistinct as they can. It seems as if the horror of trouble which is infesting a certain section of our young people had extended to the labours of the lips; and that the neat and careful formation of words was something quite beyond the ordinary energies of life. The first thing which strikes all English people who have ears and keen perception of sounds, on returning from the Con-

tinient, is the lazy, drawing, slovenly manner of speech current among our countrymen and countrywomen. Not a letter has its due value, and none of the nicer shades of intonation are given. Those subtle distinctions which are so finely marked in the French manner of speech are with us ignored altogether; and we give such words as *witch* and *which*, *where* and *wear*, *rain* and *reign*, without the faintest sound of difference; while we clip *cousin* to *coz'n*, *clothes* to *clo's*, preference to *pref'rence*, slur often into *orfen*, put *h's* after *s's* or soft *z's*, muddle up *fortune* into *fortshun*, and *figure* into *figgar*.

Besides this grave delinquency in pronunciation, we often speak ungrammatically in our current daily conversation. How many stumble hopelessly over the traps of *I* and *me*; and how many get entangled in the difficulties of the past tense and the past participle! "That is between you and I only," is a phrase by no means rarely heard; "it is *me*," is even less rare. A very common error lies in taking the plural verb immediately after the plural noun, though the noun with which it rightly agrees is in the singular. "One after another of my children have gone;" "the last of his enemies have died;" while, even in writing, such horrible English as "neither he nor she were there," is constantly to be met with.

It is very much to be regretted that language has been made of little account in our English education; that we have no standard of excellence, either for grammar or pronunciation; and that we take no pains with the organ if even we had this standard as our rule. Schools, where deportment and dancing, and how to get into a carriage gracefully, and how to come into a room with an air, are taught, leave the voice and daily speech alone, trusting solely to the power of imitation for a correct method of pronunciation and the avoidance of any gross mistakes in grammar, but never making the management or modulation of the voice of any real account, nor holding the art of conversation as an art useful to be learned and necessary to be studied, before it can be practised. It would be a good thing if the teachers of our young people could and would take in hand the art of speaking: both with regard to the management of the voice and the carefulness of conversational grammar, as well as with regard to conversation itself.

DOGS WE HAVE HAD.

A VERY yellow, wiry, not to say stubbly terrier of the middle size, with ears cropped to the pattern that suggests the sharp points of the old-fashioned, now exploded "gills;" with iron-grey whiskers, and a general air of watchful inquiry for rats; brought back with a string round her, by a ragged boy. This is Vixen the First, originally purchased in open market, and who, after a day's absence, has been brought home. Her ransom costs half-a-crown. Her first introduction to the family

had been from under a hall chair, whither she had retreated, and whence she looked warily. When it was attempted to draw her from this lair (disrespectfully by the neck), she growled and snapped. On this display of an evil soul, it was almost resolved to deport her, but on entreaty one chance was given her, of which she availed herself so speedily, so engagingly, as to become an universal favourite, the best of companions, most honest of creatures. This was in the old school days, when the alliance between dog and boy is of the strictest sort. There is a feeling of *equality*, then. She shared in everything. As he read and studied, she had her corner, where, coiled up into something like a snail-shell, and making a pillow of her own hind leg, she dreamed the most exquisite dreams, and groaned over charming processions of endless rats. There were more delightful holidays when the sun was shining, and we went forth for the whole day's walking—a prospect she had forethought of, and enjoyed as much as her master. Then, after miles of walking, we came to the park, and the copses, and sat under a tree, and basked in the sun; the master finding Rookwood excellent company, while the Vixen, with a profoundly business-like air, cultivated her natural history, and explored the district as if she were a canine botanist, bound to report on the Flora of the region. Surely, in these burrowings and upturnings, these testings with eye and nose, they see and discover as many things of interest. Sometimes she would start a rabbit, and pursue it, hopelessly; but these were rare openings. Very pleasant were those bivouacs, and I feel the scent of the May blossoms floating past me now.

Once, there was a large review of soldiers in this place, and we agreed to go together, as usual. But I noticed that the Vixen was rather taken aback by the long files of red coats: taking a few steps towards them, halting, and, with suspicious inquiry in the nostrils, scrutinising the arrangements up and down. She did not like the distant bugle, and looked round uneasily. So, with the hoarse sounds of command, the faint hum and clatter, and the tinkling of arms, chains, and bridles; these unpastoral associations were not what she expected, and she made slow progress, drawing back her head and putting the question with her quivering nostrils: "What the deuce, my dear fellow, is all this?" But when the artillery came thundering and clanking up beside us, and the first gun and the second nearly shook her off her balance, without a second's delay, she fled, with ears down, body stretched out, hare-like, a victim of sudden panic, scouring the wide plain. I beheld her between two lines of soldiers. I saw her through the smoke, giving one hurried glance over her shoulder. For her, the end of her world was come. Pandemonium was at her heels. Grief and rage filled my heart. My companion was gone for ever—gone into that cloud of smoke. I should never see her again. I made a vain attempt at pursuit, but saw her grow into a yellow speck, far away

over the plain. It was all over. I was alone. What was a review now to me? I was miles from home, and towards home I now went, moodily, and in deep grief. There, faces of surprise and eager questions met me. "What have you done with The Vixen?" Question answered testily, I fear with petulance even. Tired and heated, not in the mood to be questioned, I entered the study, about to fling myself into the easy-chair, and mourn privately and wearily. When lo! I see *in* the easy-chair; fagged also, and very dusty and travel-stained, the yellow runaway, the *saue qui peut*, lifting her head, as if it were from a pillow, languidly, wagging her tail, uncertain whether about to receive punishment or congratulation. The boyish heart condoned everything—nay, deemed that she had rather won honours. She had never taken that journey before, yet had made her way home by an unfamiliar road, and must have travelled at headlong speed.

We were always on the best and most familiar terms, and yet she had a quick temper. She was passionate; but *she knew that failing, and controlled it*. On a few occasions a little chastisement was threatened, and she retreated under a chair, and there, as from a fortification, looked out, all tusks, and teeth, and snarl, with her upper lip turned inside out, filled with a demoniacal fury. The next moment she would be all love and friendliness.

She was not regarded with much favour above stairs, as wanting refinement and elegant manners. It was as though one had "taken up" with a friend of low estate. I think she was aware of this unreasonable prejudice, and, regarding it as insurmountable, never attempted to soften it away. In this she showed her sagacity; yet once when there was company, a gentleman playing the violin—an instrument she detested—the door was pushed open softly, and she entered, bearing a large junk of stolen beef. There was a kind of pride in her achievement, with yet a latent sense of the unlawfulness of the act, there was an air of guilt, and also of stolid audacity in the manner in which she entered, walking slowly and leisurely in through the midst of the company—half skulking, half inviting attention, her eyes rolling round the corner towards her master with a comic expression of doubt. The scene was true comedy, for it was a polite meeting—silks and fine clothes, tea and the "quality"—and the intruder, wiry and unkempt and a little dusty, had come direct from the stable. Was it the vanity of her sex prompted her to pay that visit with her purloined booty? Was it ambition, or a love of fine company? She was free of the kitchen, or, better still, the garden, where, with that grizzly nose of hers, she had dug many a little pit, using the same feature afterwards as a shovel, to cover up secreted treasure.

Vixen the First lived many years, during which we enjoyed many delightful country walks together, and she killed innumerable rats, and swam in rivers and brooks, and fought

other dogs with credit and reputation, and was a most pliant and entertaining companion. Sometimes her tastes, being of a vagabond sort, led her away from home in the company of dogs about town, who were of wild and even profligate manners. These excesses gave her a taste for the pleasures of the table, and an immoderate fancy for meat, which had the usual fatal results of a free life. In due time she was laid up with an attack of the malady so fatal to canine personal charms. There was the usual fierce scratchings, and finally the wiry hair began to come off in patches. Eminent physicians were called in, and some sort of cure effected. But the moral weakness was not to be eradicated—nay, it developed with restraint; and a fatal outrage, when she was detected on the table-cloth after lunch, in the act of trying to get a convenient hold of a limbless fowl, preparatory to carrying it away, caused a council to be held at once in reference to her case. It was resolved, after a secret deliberation—our opinion had not then much weight in the councils of the house—to get rid of Vixen the First: not, I am happy to say, by execution or other violent measures, but by conferring her as a gift on a gentleman in the country, who fortunately had a taste for “varmint”—in the sense of what is Bohemian in the matter of sport—and for this reason was willing to overlook those cutaneous blemishes. But though unlike the leopard, she might change her spots, she could not overcome her old appetites, whetted by sharp country air and pastimes; and we were soon grieved to learn that the amateur of “varmint” had found himself constrained to part with his useful assistant. More than two years later, at a sea-side place, a decayed-looking “cur” came creeping across the street from the heels of a Sykes-looking fellow, and looked up to me with wistful recognition, as though half afraid that such acknowledgment would take the shape of the prompt and sharp kick. There was something very piteous in this cringing self-depreciation. The dog, too, was thin and bony, and the tail, once carried so jauntily, as a knowing fellow wears his hat, was now gathered up timorously under the legs. Suddenly Sykes gave a whistle and a sharp curse, and the luckless animal slunk off. That was the last I saw of Vixen the First.

A year or so later some one brings to the house a little diminutive Sky terrier, coal black, rough-haired, not uncomely, and about two hands long. This gentleman is known as “Jack.” Being a lady’s property, he is forthwith pampered, and made free of drawing-rooms and bedrooms: which I feel acutely as a retrospective injustice to the memory of the lost Vixen the First.

Jack was, I suppose, the most delightful instance of real, natural, undisguised *selfishness* that could be conceived. Loaded with benefits, stuffed with delicacies, he made not the slightest pretence of caring for the persons who so favoured him. In justice to him, it must be ad-

mitted that he never attempted to bite them; but after his meal, or indeed at any season, when he was stretched at length on his rug, any endearments from even the privileged hand of his mistress, were resented with testy growlings and ill-humoured movings away. The only one for whom he had toleration or the faint appearance of regard was a person of low degree, an old retainer of the family, who kept a little whip privately for his special behoof, and who used to hold conversations with him through the pantry-window. “I’ll give you the whip, sir, I will,” &c. To this official, I am proud to say for the sake of our common animal nature, he was almost fawning in his behaviour, making affectation of being overjoyed to see him, and when the retainer would return, after an absence of a week, going—artful hypocrite—into convulsions of whinings, jumpings, and such pretences of delight. His mistress has been away a month, and he has been known to trot up the kitchen stairs to see what the commotion of her return might be about, stand at a distance, look on at the new arrival, then coolly turn his back, and strut leisurely down again, as though the matter was unworthy his attention. Yet it was almost impossible not to feel an interest in him, for this very indifference or independence. And he had his good points also. He was a perfect gentleman; seemed always to recollect his good birth and breeding, and no persuasions of servants could retain him below in their kitchen quietly, save in very cold weather, when he had his reasons for engaging the great fire there. He was always intriguing to slip away from servants. But, faithful to his principles, he knew their dinner hour to the moment, and no seductions of high society would then prevent his going down to join them at that desirable time. Sometimes if detained above by stratagem, he would at last escape, and would come galloping in among them, panting, with an air, as though he were conferring a favour, and as who should say, “I was unavoidably detained, but I have since tried hard to make up for lost time.”

He had likewise learned little tricks of begging round the table for food—a practice a little humiliating for a gentleman of his birth, but still consistent with his principles. For, if invited “to beg” where food was not concerned, he would resent it, and if importuned, would growl. During meal-time he certainly gave his mistress the preference, going on short excursions to any one who invited him with any conspicuous morsel, but returning to her side. If, however, she said, “No more, sir,” and showed him the palms of her hands, he at once turned away from her, with unconcealed contempt, taking up his residence with some more promising person. No bare endearments could in the least detain him. Another merit of his was rare personal courage. He was afraid of no one, man, woman, child, or dog. For so tiny a creature this was really to be admired. Attack him with a stick or

umbrella, and he would stand on his defence, with his face honourably towards you, growling, snarling, and even *menling* with rage, and all the time retiring cleverly and slowly until he got to shelter.

In the streets he trotted along with infinite dignity, and towards other dogs bore himself with a haughty contempt. Nothing was more amusing than to see a big, frisking, free-mannered dog run at him and coolly tumble him over in the dust, and to see the little outraged gentleman pick himself up, all over dust, growling and snarling with rage and mortification. More amusing still was it to see a great Newfoundland dog stalk up, not quite sure whether this could be a rat, or one of his own species, whom he was bound to respect. As he became importunate in his curiosity, and troublesome in his half friendly, half hostile attention, it was delicious to see Jack turn and snap deliberately at him, sputtering rage, while the giant would start back confounded, not knowing what to make of it.

Seven, eight, nine years roll by, and he is actually getting to be a little old gentleman. He wheezes and coughs a good deal as he goes up-stairs. His black eyes are not so brilliant as of yore. But he has become snappish and impatient, more testy and selfish than ever. He is, in fact, just like other old gentlemen. His appetite is just as great, and he *will* eat hearty meals, which, however, do not agree with him; and though he is usually unwell after these hearty banquets, the lesson is quite thrown away on him. His fine black whiskers have turned grey and rusty. In the house, too, changes have taken place. He has lost friends, and it grieves me to think that in these old days of his he found a change, and learnt what the world was. I wonder did he make a sort of Wolsey reflection on the world, when, with much wheezing and coughing, he had toiled up-stairs, and coming confidently in at the drawing-room would be met with a stern "Go down, sir!—go down!" But what could one do for him? He was not the young buck he used to be, and he had, besides, an affection of the hinder leg, something in the nature of slight paralytic stroke, brought on by excess at table.

Another wiry yellow dog arrives on the scene, carried in the arms of a Jewish-looking gentleman, in a squirrel cap, whose profession is dogs—with so gentle and amiable an air about her, and with such a resemblance to my old favourite, that I at once redeem her from captivity for the sum of fifteen shillings, and christen her "Vixen the Second."

She was the strangest combination in physique; with the yellow wiry-haired body of the ordinary terrier, she had the snout of the bull terrier, perfectly coal black, and the brightest and largest of black eyes set darting forward like dark carbuncles. With this truculent and remarkable exterior she showed herself the most engaging and gentle creature. Chil-

dren shrank from her as she jogged by with the true bull dog, wary, business-like air. But she did not want for pluck or courage, as every street boy knew—a class whom she regarded with detestation. Half a mile away, the sight of a pair of bare legs, a cap, and a torn jacket, threw her into a fury: down went her head and ears, and she was off like an arrow, and presently flying round the bare legs. Beggar boys, boys with baskets, all sorts of boys, had the same effect: low men with a generally blackguard look fell under the same odium. I am inclined to believe that in a previous state of life she had suffered persecution from beings of this sort. She was up to anything in the way of sport or gamesomeness, and if pursued by any rough, at whose heels she had been flying, would retreat under a cart, and there stand snarling and spitting horribly. Sometimes correction became necessary, and then she would take her corporal punishment with eyes closed fast, shrinking away from it, and crouching, but with true Spartan fortitude, never uttering even a yelp. Her intelligence was surprising. If her master assumed an expression of displeasure, she grew disturbed and uneasy. And here was a favourite exercise to show off her sagacity. When he was reading and she half snoozing with her chin on her forepaws, he would say in a low quiet voice of displeasure, "What made you do it? What dy'e mean?" Her motion would be to raise her head and look round in a mournfully deprecating way, as who should say, "What is it, master?" If the reproach were repeated, she would look again with her great sad eyes, the tail pleading slowly, and finally raising herself in the most deprecating way, would steal over, and with a sort of groan, would raise herself on her hind legs and piteously implore forgiveness. The moment she saw a smile, her tail wagged joyfully.

She had the sweetest disposition, this Vixen the Second. She had even taught herself, God knows how, a sort of moral restraint and discipline. She had her rule of life, based upon what she thought would be pleasing to the Great Being, so he seemed to her, that guided her existence. Take an instance. We all know those harmless salutations and flirtations interchanged among those of her race, who are perfect strangers to each other, and which appear almost an etiquette. No one had so keen a zest for these interviews as Vixen. Her remarkable air, a little bizarre, but highly attractive, drew crowds of admirers around her. Yet when they came with their insidious homage, she would indeed stop, for she knew what was due to the courtesies; she would, for a second be dazzled; but in another moment the moral principle had asserted itself, and with a secret agony—for the struggle cost her much, she was dog after all—she tore herself away, and came rushing to make up for even that second's dalliance. On one occasion only did her resolution fail her, and that was when a matchless bull-terrier of a dazzling snow-white, and an

exquisite shape, breed, and symmetry, made some advances. He was dressed in the height of the mode, richly, with a collar decorated around with silver and most musical bells. This captivating creature was too much for her; she was deaf to all angry calls—threats even—seemed determined to pursue this fascinating acquaintance, and prepared to give up all and follow him. But this was a brief intoxication, the old, old story, all for love, and the world well lost. She was observed to be quiet and pensive all that day, and when she went out again, looked about restlessly for the brilliant white admirer: *he*, of course, had long since forgotten the incident, and was busy enslaving some other charmer.

For Vixen the Second, the kitchen had not that charm which it has for other dogs. Neither had she that liking for ostlers, footmen, &c., which her kind usually entertain. She was always scheming to get up-stairs; below, her ears were always strained for the far-off whistle; indeed, her organisation was so delicate, and her affection so strong, that she knew the peculiar sound of her master's step as the hall-door opened and he entered. After breakfast every morning there was heard a faint "pat-pat" on the oilcloth in the hall, drawing nearer. Those who watched her found that this was her favourite *secret* gait, with which she contrived to make escape from below when they wished to detain her, thus passing the pantry-door on tiptoe. Sitting at his study-table, her master would see her moving inward mysteriously, and presently a wistful nose, and a pair of more wistful eyes were introduced, softly looking round the edge, and saying as plain as nose and eyes could say, "Do let me come in, please." She would stay in that position until the solicited invitation was given, then enter on her favourite gait, receive congratulations, and proceed to take her favourite turning round and round before coiling herself properly. Often, with a heavy sigh, she would let herself drop full length upon her side and lie out lazily. This was all sheer coquetry, for she could have entered boldly and in the usual way of her kind. The only exception was after washing day, below: a terrible ceremony, which she shrank from. When she saw the large tub brought out, she skulked under the table with signs of horror and repulsion; then, in the first unguarded moment, disappeared into some strange and ingenious place of concealment, which for a long time defied the strictest search. After this washing operation was happily over, she would come bursting in abruptly, her wiry hair standing on end through imperfect drying, and would go prancing about, snuffling and coughing, evidently thrown off her centre by the operation. It was the soap, I think, which affected her, through the smell of the alkali employed. It was no craven shrinking from the water, for she swam bravely; and on the coldest days, when curs were cowering away from the water's edge, she would plunge in boldly to fetch out sticks, evidently in obedience to her

high sense of duty, though trembling with cold, and much buffeted by the rough waves.

Jack, yet alive, shared in all our excursions, and shared Vixen the Second's kennel. At last, however, the time came when these pleasant relations were to be broken up for ever. Old Jack began to fail, yet gradually. When the cheerful cry for going abroad reached him, he would rise, walk a short way eagerly, then recollect himself, as it were, and go back. He preferred his easy-chair by the fire. He grew more cross every day, or rather hour. He found the temperature of his own private house in the yard too severe, and used actually to simulate exhaustion, to get taken in and be laid before the kitchen fire, and treated with tenderness and interest by female hands. He would bask in that agreeable atmosphere, lying with an almost comic languor, apparently without sense or motion, save when any one touched him as if to remove him, when he would forget his part, and emit a low cantankerous growl. Seeing the success of this manoeuvre, he often resorted to it, until the public at last refused to be so imposed on, and rather neglected his touching symptoms. This only made him more peevish and disagreeable. A more genuine symptom was the small size to which he was shrinking: growing smaller every hour; originally a little dog, he had become now of a very tiny pattern—his rich black coat had grown rusty, and his dark face and muzzle had turned an iron grey. In these later days he took refuge in a sort of indifference, which had the air of a wounded reserve. He kept himself to himself, as it were. Invited in, he did not seem to care to accept civilities. The paralytic affection seemed to gain on him, arching his back rather, and drawing up his hinder leg. Poor Jack!

One winter evening set in more than usually severe—frosty, with a bitter wind. Events of some importance had been going forward in the mansion, and throughout the day, beyond the customary invitation to come and take his breakfast, not much notice had been bestowed on him. Later, at a less engrossing period, a faithful maid, perhaps feeling compunction, went to look after him and bring him in. He was discovered, his meal, untouched, lying near him, cold and collapsed, and with scarcely any sign of life. He was carried in tenderly, and carefully laid down on the warm hearth, and rubbed carefully and assiduously. The sight of his loved kitchen fire, and its genial warmth—the sun to which this little canine Parsee always turned his face with something like idolatry—seemed to draw him back to life. His eyes opened languidly, his little shrunken body glowed anew. But as he made an effort to get nearer to the fire, the head dropped over quietly, and the hinder leg gave a little twitch. Life had ebbed away very gently. A simple basket, containing his poor old remains, was carried unostentatiously to a neighbouring square, where a friendly gardener, who had often noted him taking his easy morning constitutional over the pleasant sward, undertook the sexton's duty,

and performed the last decent offices in a pretty flower bed. Vixen the Second attended as mourner, but behaved with something like levity, and yet, at the same time, exhibiting an uneasy curiosity about the basket; otherwise she showed no concern.

If Vixen had a penchant it was for butchers' shops: which she discovered afar off, and to which, if we were on the other side of the street, she crossed over, in a most circuitous and artful fashion, and with a guilty creeping way, quite foreign to her. She never stood irresolute in front of the entrance, sniffing from a distance, as some foolish dogs do, who are repulsed with a kick. She entered privately under the counter, crept round leisurely, and invariably secured some choice "swag." Indeed, some of her robberies were too daring, as on the day we visited the confectioner's shop together, when she partook of various delicacies, yet lingered behind on some pretext. She was presently seen to emerge at full speed from the confectioner's door, carrying with infinite difficulty a large bath bun in her jaws, the confectioner himself in angry pursuit. How she got possession of this delicacy could not be ascertained; he said, "it were when his back was turned," an affront he seemed to feel. He was, of course, indemnified, and the daring shoplifter was foolishly allowed to retain the property, eating it in pieces of convenient size. When taken to sit for her portrait, she imparted a dramatic element into that operation. The thorough investigation she made; the sniffing at the chemicals; the speculation as to the apparatus, camera, &c., which seemed to have some suspicious connexion with fire arms; the searching behind the theatrical draperies; but when business came, her sense of duty at once asserted itself, and the operator owned that he had found his human sitters more difficult to "pose" and far more affected. She arrayed herself on the cushion placed for her, and gazed with her bright eyes intently on a bit of biscuit held out ostentatiously behind the camera. There was a gentle motion in her tail, but this I firmly believe she was not conscious of, or she would have suppressed it. The result was surprising—I am looking at it now—sharp, clear, unblurred, and life-like.

The relations of dog and boy are always of a lively sort. I do not speak of the ill conditioned boy, who torments his dog, throws stones at him, half drowns him in water, ties a tin kettle to the tail. Such I should like to see hunted hard over the country, with all the honest dogs of the parish at his heels. But the good manly boy finds a friend and companion in his dog, a sympathiser and friend, who is always glad to see, or to go with, him. The hotter, the more dusty the day, the longer the country road, the more welcome to Vixen the Second. Once the great green park was reached, with its eddying hills, its delightful slopes and swards, under the thorns, then supremest felicity set in; the race, the eating of grass, the tossing of the head, the fresh

scamper, the drinking at the clear brook side, the book drawn out on the soft bank, with reader and book reflected in the brightest and most flashing of mirrors, while Vixen the Second is away on short explorings. Now a whirr from the root of the old tree that stoops over the water, and the restless investigator has made out a nest, now a sudden plash and yelp of disappointment, and the nose is pointed quivering, as a great water rat leaps in, evicted from his lodgings.

Sometimes the journey would be enlivened by incidents of broad farce. She was not without a sense of the higher grotesque. We once met a strange wiry old maid in a limp skirt, a little short cape, a "poke" bonnet of the day of George the Fourth, and a long spiky parasol. This lady arose suddenly from a bench where she had been reading in a pastoral way; the effect on Vixen was a humorous one; she gave a start and a short grunt, jumping from this side to that, and looking back at me, as who should say, "What sort of Yahoo have we here?" She quite divined the harmless character of the apparition, but saw it was abnormal, and accordingly contented herself with short barks; then took a short wheel in front of the apparition, and lay down with her nose to the ground, like an Indian skirmisher with a musket pointed.

Or, one might come suddenly on a stray party of boys with a donkey. One of the happiest and most satisfactory moments conceivable for the gamin mind. There would be a tall fellow or two, who equally relished their share of the donkey, though scarcely to be ranked in the category of boys; one of whom, by superior force, was presently mounted, his feet almost touching the ground, and then the whole cortège set off in exquisite delight, the tall youth riding stiffly and warily, as the donkey had its ears suspiciously straight and a queer look on its mouth. Off they set full speed, voices chattering and screaming with delight, the dust in clouds, hoofs pattering, and a whole rain of pokes, thumps, pushes, pinches! Comic, and so it seems to Vixen, who, in a second, has her ears down, stoops, and is off at full speed. She gives low shrieks of enjoyment, and as the clouds of dust clear, she is seen keeping up with the party, attaching herself to the heels of the donkey, giving him every now and again a short sharp bite. In a moment the donkey's back shoots up in the air, and Vixen is rolling over in the dust, and left behind; in a second moment she is up again, shrieking and yelping with enjoyment, and again has her sly bite below, but is more cautious in avoiding the return stroke. Up goes the back again, and suddenly there is a great scramble, and abrupt stillness, with a cloud of dust rising slowly. As it clears away afar off, I am toiling on behind. I see that the last uprising of the back (stimulated by Vixen) has been successful—that the lazy boy has been shot over the donkey's head—that one of his infantine aides has been upset in the confusion—that

the donkey has been down himself as far as his knees, but is now standing like a stock or a rock in the centre of the disaster.

This faithful friend, and those who admired and respected her, were soon to be parted. It has been mentioned that she was of a delicate, finely strung nature, susceptible in the highest degree; skilful acquaintances remarking the curious prominence and lustre of her wonderful eyes, prophesied in a highly encouraging way, "I shouldn't be at all surprised if that dog went mad one of these days." This had the air of a special revelation; but who is surprised at *any* dog going mad one of these days? We treated the prophecy with contempt. It came to pass that the family had to go and travel, and Vixen the Second was left behind, according to the newspaper phrase, "during a protracted sojourn." Special instructions were left that she should enjoy every luxury of diet, walkings, &c.; but as was learned on return, nothing could a charm impart. Whether the matron in whose charge she was left, performed her trust conscientiously, it is not for me to say; her own rapturous declaration, that "if ever there was an 'appy dog on this world's earth, it were her," seemed to be confuted by Vixen the Second's silent protest, and cowering away as the matron made advances. I had more reliance on that simple assurance of the honest creature who had never deceived, than on the matronly Gamp's volubility. Vixen was in a tumult of joy to welcome us, and executed many strange and characteristic dances in testimony of her joy; but otherwise she had grown dull and dejected. The matron (I heard later) had been fond of giving tea parties, having a large circle of friends, and was therefore inclined to "drat" that ere dog, or any thing that interfered with her social pleasures. She had never treated Vixen the Second to any delicious country walks, or green fields. However, we would now resume them on the old scale.

We went out "to shop" that very day, and, entering a bookseller's, Vixen went off as usual to explore corners behind the book boxes, unearth bits of india-rubber lying in corners, and keep her nose in practice by finding traces of rats or cats. The shopman comes mysteriously, and says:

"Why I think, sir, your dog is ill."

I follow him into a most seductive place, tremendously suggestive of rats, and there see poor Vixen the Second rolling contorted on the ground in a fit. *Think* she was ill!

It was a long struggle; but the faithful creature, when encouraged and called to, made a wild effort to raise herself on her convulsed hinder legs, as she was accustomed to do to receive friendly approbation, but instantly fell back and rolled upon the ground. She got over it—walked home a little wild and confused, but still walked home. Next day we set off on a long, long walk, the first of the series, which should gradually restore her lusty health. It was a fine fresh day, and we took a long

stretch of miles along a sort of pier. Vixen was not full of alacrity—was rather heavy, with a curious suspiciousness in her manner, halting every now and again, and looking about her as if she expected danger. Still she exerted herself on every invitation to investigate holes for rats, &c., but her heart was not in the work. It was mere complaisance—the old wish to oblige and be agreeable. We walked until evening, then we turned. A butcher's boy passed, though without his insignia, but she knew him—the old instinct—and I own it was not with displeasure that I saw the sharp wiry ears go down, and Vixen make at his legs. He was some way in front, and she had some distance to rush. To my surprise, she quite passed her old enemy, pursuing her course as if, to use the butcher's expression, "a thousand devils were at her tail." The yellow figure grew smaller in the distance. I jumped on a wall and saw it growing yet smaller—still going on at the same frantic pace. Now she was a faint yellow speck; now she was a mile away, now out of sight. I never saw her again. A tragic exit—as it were rushing away into space.

A fishing village was between me and my home, where there was an idle, noisy, ne'er-dowell throng, ripe for any baiting or any mischief. I asked for her here, but they had seen nothing. Yet there was an odd manner about those desperados, as I recollected afterwards. When I got home, no Vixen's wiry head was put out of the study-door. Perhaps the poor honest creature had met a cruel end among these ruffians; perhaps she had felt her megrims coming on, and from the pain had rushed away, and these fellows had raised the cry of "Mad dog!" and had hunted the gentle creature to death. I have another theory, quite consistent with her gentle temper, that she felt madness coming on her, and rushed off thus into the void and into space, severing all ties, in preference to doing involuntary injury to those she loved. But I have no warrant for this theory.

DURHAM DEEDS.

I HAVE a dim recollection of a portrait supposed to represent his Royal Highness the Duke of York, as Bishop of Osnaburg. They had sent me down—a weakling child—to a country farmhouse to live or die, whichever my destiny might be. Opposite the ingle nook glared the duke bishop in flowing canonicals, a mitre on his head, red with jewels of gigantic size, and a crozier in his right hand. But he wore jack-boots with tremendous spurs, was girded with a sword, and his buccaneer belt was stuck full of pistols. On his left, rose a village church out of a quiet grave-yard; on his right, a village in flames, women and children flying in despair, and dragoons charging fiercely down upon them. I wondered, child as I was, whether all bishops were princes, and whether

the grave old prelate, who once preached so mildly to the farmers, commanded a regiment of dragoons.

Osanburg, they told me, was somewhere in Germany, and things were different there. But I have since found that even in England bishops were formidable potentates in the good old times. The Bishops of Durham were palatines as well as prelates, and if they preached the blessing of mercy *ex cathedra*, they not unfrequently gave short shrift and summary execution to petty wrongdoers whose guilt in these degenerate days would be expiated by a week's imprisonment. No doubt many a shivering criminal was affectionately consigned to the episcopal scaffold. A Bishop of Durham was then the undisputed master of a small kingdom, but the despotic power of more extensive monarchies was concentrated in his person. The bishop coined money at his own mint, levied taxes for his own behoof, raised troopers for the defence of his own realm or the maintenance of his own power. He named his ermined judges of assize, of Oyer and Terminer, of gaol delivery, and of the peace. He could, if he pleased, pardon all intrusions, trespasses, felonies, outrages on women, and misprisions of treason. He took, for his own perquisites, all fines for alienations, amercements, forfeited recognizances, post fines, and bishop's silver. He granted licences to feudal lords to crenellate and embattle castles—a privilege not appreciated by the miserable serfs around. The bishops were lords admiral of the seas and waters within the palatinate. They "enjoyed"—that is the term—all wrecks of the sea, royal fish, anchorage, wharfage, metage, and forfeitures. They were partial to game and venison, and therefore held in their own right forests, woods, and chases, with courts to decide summarily all questions incident to *venerie*. They appointed all the authorities of the palatinate, and these held office only "during the bishop's pleasure," or for his life. They held courts of justice, and named the judges, and these courts embraced a Chancery, an Exchequer, a court of Common Pleas, and a county court, with full authority and severe sanctions.

O the good old times! And O the dear old days! And O the preaching parrots! And what a loss we have had of it! (This by way of parenthesis.)

When so many courts, jurisdictions, privileges and prerogatives existed, and when wars between the Scots and borderers led to numerous transfers of property, an immense mass of documents necessarily accumulated. These documents when they do not directly relate to, indirectly illustrate, the history, antiquities, public and private life, customs, rights, properties, crimes, and punishments of the palatinates of old. The collection if complete would now be of immense extent, but evil fortune befell it from the first. It is said that the precious manuscripts from which the Complutensian edition of the New Testament was printed were subsequently used up in the manu-

facture of cases for sky-rockets. With equal recklessness and no less criminality, the records of the palatinate were applied to stop up holes made by rats and mice, to kindle fires, and even make bonfires in times of public festival. Barrows full, it is in evidence, were kicked about the palace green, under the bishop's nose. Little boys of the episcopal city made kites of them, and for many a day the cooks of Durham never wanted a bundle of deeds wherewith to singe a goose. No "class" of documents can now be formed, of a date anterior to the Pontificate of Antony Bek, who governed from 1280 to 1311, though occasionally in turning over a heap of manuscripts, a stray parchment is found of earlier date, proving that a series did once exist. The executors of Cosins, Bishop and Palatine made short work of a vast quantity of records. They feared—provident and careful men—lest in succeeding generations troublesome questions might arise concerning the titles to the estates which the bishop had continued to amass: so to obviate this inconvenience, they deliberately burned eight chests full of the ancient muniments of the see! In 1647 the Scots swept into Durham, and in the language of the historian, "made havoc of the bishoprick and violated all its rights." One Captain Brewer, with a company of troopers at his heels, threw from the windows all "the records, books, papers, and muniments he could find, and broke up the presses which contained them, for firewood." Prior to this invasion, a "great deal box" full of charters and evidences, amongst which was "that noted and famous record," the Liber Ruber or Red Book of Durham was brought to the house of one George Neusam of York city, without letter or direction. Given by him to one Richard Harrison, the box and its contents were never heard of more. So late as 1854, when an Act of Parliament placed the records of the palatinate under the charge of the Master of the Rolls, it was found that all the records of the Durham county courts had disappeared, and not a fragment remained to tell of their nature or their value.

More than four hundred years ago, Bishop Neville raised a "goodly stone building" for the reception of the palatinate records. Here they were deposited, but not safely, as the woful destruction of the records proves. The authorities of the university of Durham wished to acquire Bishop Neville's structure for the purpose of a library, and the queen transferred to them her rights in the building on condition that they should provide a sufficient edifice elsewhere to supply its place. In the autumn of 1854, before the removal of the records to the new building, they were inspected by Mr. J. Duffus Hardy, who reported on their general condition. He found most of the records "in a lamentable state." The several officers having charge of them were incompetent to read them or afford any assistance to legal or literary inquirers. One of the officers, a man seventy years of age, had been appointed to his post when eighteen months old! There were no

inventories, calendars, or indexes, throughout the several offices, and the condition of the whole mass of documents was disgraceful. Mr. Hardy recommended that the documents in each repository belonging to the crown should be sorted into classes and catalogued, before their removal to the new building constructed for their reception. Durham is the seat of a university; its bishopric was one of the richest in England; the county gentry are affluent, and proud of their ancient lineage. They were supposed to be interested in the preservation and accessibility of the public records. Mr. Hardy naturally thought his suggestions would be adopted. He returned to London, heard that the records had been transferred to the new building, and then for several years the officials were untroubled by inquiries.

The records, however, might have been allowed to continue, as the deputy-keeper of the rolls states, "in their present disgusting state of decomposition and filth until they had been entirely destroyed," but for an accident. Mr. Scott F. Surtees, on an important trial, had occasion to consult the Registry and Record Offices at Durham. One document, very important to his case, could not be found, and it was not until Mr. Surtees had secured the services of Mr. Langstaffe, "the only person who knew anything about the Durham records"—at an expense of five pounds—that the document was forthcoming. Mr. Surtees added to his statement that the state of the Registry and Record Offices at Durham is a disgrace to the age in which we live; and, addressing the Master of the Rolls, expressed a hope "that for the benefit of those who are interested in the history of the north Humber principality, these valuable papers might be more accessible to the historian and the archaeologist."

Mr. Surtees' letter was dated in June 'Sixty-seven, and on the first of October, Mr. Duffus Hardy again proceeded to examine the condition of the records in the episcopal and university city. Thirteen years before, he had reported that "the records in the office of the clerk of the peace are in a lamentable state of disorder. Papers, books, and parchments are littered about the floor more than knee deep, some strewn upon tables, chairs, and window-seats; others huddled together on shelves and in cupboards." He had to state, after his last visit, that "their present state of neglect is, if possible, worse than it was thirteen years ago, when that report was made. The documents have the appearance of having been pitched into the rooms with a fork because they were found too filthy to be handled." The present clerk of the peace has frequently called the attention of the justices of the peace for the county of Durham to the discreditable state of

the office, "but no attention has been paid to Mr. Watson's remonstrances."

The records of the county palatine of Lancaster having been found in a condition somewhat resembling that of the records of Durham, were transferred to London, where they are admirably kept and accessible to all. The records of Chester, similarly circumstanced, have been arranged, repaired, and the greater portion of them brought under public knowledge by a printed calendar. The Master of the Rolls proposed either that the Durham records should be transferred to London, or that the people of Durham should secure the services of a competent keeper and a clerk to aid him, at the expense of about seven hundred pounds a year. The justices of the peace and many of the gentry object to the transfer of their ancient muniments to London.

Nevertheless they will not pay for their keep. The interest of these papers is almost wholly local. They are not to be confounded with the ecclesiastical documents belonging to the bishopric, or with the valuable illustrations of our early history and literature which are carefully preserved in the cathedral. They are records of proceedings in which the bishop was concerned of old time as a secular prince of Durham, of great local value, but on the whole, probably of slight national importance. But, according to an Act of Parliament providing for such cases, they will have to be brought to London because Durham declines to pay for the due custody of its own papers.

FAREWELL SERIES OF READINGS.

BY

MR. CHARLES DICKENS.

MESSRS. CHAPPELL AND Co. beg to announce that, knowing it to be the determination of MR. DICKENS finally to retire from Public Reading soon after his return from America, they (as having been honoured with his confidence on previous occasions) made proposals to him while he was still in the United States achieving his recent brilliant successes there, for a final FAREWELL SERIES OF READINGS in this country. Their proposals were at once accepted by MR. DICKENS, in a manner highly gratifying to them.

The Series will commence in the ensuing autumn, and will comprehend, besides London, some of the chief towns in England, Ireland, and Scotland. It is scarcely necessary for MESSRS. CHAPPELL AND Co. to add that any announcement made in connexion with these FAREWELL READINGS will be strictly adhered to, and considered final; and that on no consideration whatever will MR. DICKENS be induced to appoint an extra night in any place in which he shall have been once announced to read for the last time.

All communications to be addressed to MESSRS. CHAPPELL AND Co., 50, New Bond-street, London, W.

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